

# THE TIMES

No. 66,423

FRIDAY JANUARY 29 1999

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## Waiting list fund raided to pay nurses

By JILL SHERMAN AND ROLAND WATSON

THE Government sparked protests yesterday by announcing that it is to raid the £1 billion health service modernisation fund to finance big pay rises for nurses.

Downing Street angered health service managers when it admitted that it intended to use money earmarked for reducing waiting lists and buying high-technology equipment to top up nurses' pay. Junior nurses are expected to receive 11 per cent increases on Monday when a £4 million recruitment campaign will be launched, while others in the profession will receive an average of 4.7 per cent.

The awards will cost £400 million more than had been set aside for health service pay, but the Government appears prepared to use money intended for other purposes to stay within Gordon Brown's public spending limits.

The Cabinet yesterday approved pay awards for the 1.3 million employees covered by the five independent pay review bodies teachers, armed forces, nurses and midwives, doctors and dentists, and senior civil servants and judges. All of the awards will be met in full and none will be phased.

Mr Brown told colleagues that the settlement was "affordable and fair", but made clear that cash would have to be found out of existing allocations.

That is likely to annoy councils, which have already said that if they have to pay teachers more than another 3 per cent, they will be unable to meet Tony Blair's pledge to cut classroom sizes.

Teachers are expected to get awards of up to 4 per cent, doctors 3.5 per cent, Armed Forces 3 to 3.5 per cent and judges and senior civil servants about 3 per cent. Downing Street admitted that nurse requirements

was seen as a priority this year, and said that teachers would not be given the same special treatment. A spokesman also made clear that only the Health Department would be allowed to draw on capital modernisation funds.

The NHS modernisation fund was set up last July specifically to address information technology, improve waiting lists, to modernise hospital departments and educate staff in new treatment patterns. When the Treasury published its report last year, it made clear that the extra money — £5 billion over three years — would be for improving health services rather than for pay awards.

Yesterday health officials said that £741 million had already been committed from £1.2 billion to be allocated in the coming financial year, and estimated that the remaining money would be almost entirely absorbed by the pay award.

Stephen Thornton, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, which represents health service employers, said: "The consequence is that we won't be able to modernise the NHS next year. That is a terrible shame because everybody in the NHS staff managers, doctors, nurses want to do that."

Ann Widdecombe, Shadow Health Secretary, urged the Government to find the award from central reserves.

"Clinical services should not suffer because the Government does not pass enough money to pay for the review body recommendations," she said. "We have already seen other services suffering this winter because of the waiting list initiative. The Government says it is spending £21 billion on the NHS so where is their problem in funding the nurses pay award properly?"

The former Conservative Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, said that the Government had landed itself in a "dreadful mess". They have announced very unrealistic expectations, they have grossly exaggerated the amount of money they have made available to pay these pay settlements and they face a deteriorating economic situation, so they have got no room for manoeuvre.

The Liberal Democrats called for an immediate injection of £500 million from Treasury reserves to prevent a collapse in NHS morale and to save thousands of teachers' jobs.

On April 26, old terms such as "writ" and "plaintiff" will be replaced by "claim forms" and "claimant". Out will go familiar Latin tags such as *ex parte*, *inter partes* and *in camera*, and in will come "with notice", "without notice" and "in private". The court will give its "permission" rather than "leave" and the distinguished



The Prince of Wales driving to Aberdeen airport on the first leg of his journey from the Queen Mother's Scottish estate near Balmoral to the Ritz last night

## Ritz besieged by the aluminium army

By ALAN HAMILTON  
AND MICHAEL HARVEY

The biggest aluminium army seen on the streets of London for some years besieged the Ritz in Piccadilly last night in the hope of snatching the picture of the decade.

More than 100 photographers, each with his jealously-guarded ladder and accompanied by reporters and broadcasting crews, crammed a 30-yard stretch of pavement on the strength of a tip-off that, after a decade of hole-in-the-corner skulduggery and pretence, the Prince of Wales would finally present himself in public with his long-standing companion Camilla Parker-Bowles.

A shot of the couple together, snatched in private, could have netted a freelance photographer an estimated £2 million from magazines around the world. Last night, the word was that the Prince and his companion would quash that opportunity for individual money-making by appearing in public for all to see.

The occasion was a party to celebrate the 50th birthday of Mrs Parker-Bowles's younger sister, Annabel Elliott. The Prince was hosting a charity dinner at St James's Palace less than five minutes drive, or even a brisk walk through



Camilla Parker-Bowles: party to celebrate sister's birthday

back alleys, away. He was expected to join the Ritz party for the last hour.

But the Ritz has many entrances, and it was feared that the couple, deterred by the

huge gathering of cameramen and the wave of preliminary speculation, might be put off and leave separately and discreetly by the back door.

As early as 9am on Wednesday,



I gather he used to be a royal photographer

day, the best squares of pavement directly opposite the main entrance had been "taped up" and then "laddered up" by representatives of the *Sun*, *Mirror* and *Daily Mail*. They were swiftly followed by independent photo agencies, other newspapers and TV companies. Within a few hours a straggling cove of ladders had sprung up as word spread, and by Wednesday night it had become a forest.

The ladder has become as much a part of the royal photographer's equipment as his flashgun and long lens. Cheap, portable and available at all good DIY stores, it not only gives the snapper a better view, but guarantees a place.

### Volvo to close Scottish plant

Volvo is to take over Volvo's car business for £3.9 million, having apparently ousted Fiat of Italy. Volvo will now concentrate on truck and bus production — but it announced the closure of its lorry assembly plant in Irvine, Ayrshire, with the loss of at least 250 jobs.

### EU manifesto

Tony Blair is to sign up to a pan-European election manifesto that praises the euro, commits the Government to trimming the scope for the veto in EU policy-making, and ending "harmful tax competition".

## No room to spin a doctor

By RACHEL KELLY  
AND BEN WAKEHAM

PETER MANDELSON may well have started at the bottom of the ladder and work his way up again when he sells his spacious town house in Notting Hill.

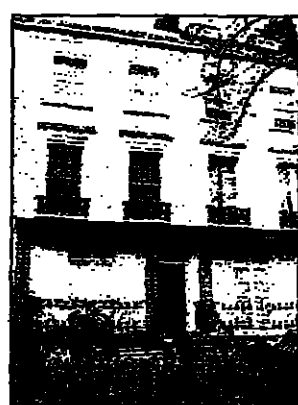
He has indicated that he wants to stay in the area but the money he has to spend may mean that he can only afford a flat on the "smallish" side.

Local estate agents said that with an expected £250,000 to spend he could afford a two-bedroom upper maisonette in the neighbouring street to

Northumberland Place, Court-nell Street.

But Richard Ford, from the Kensington Office of the estate agents Knight Frank said that by staying in the area he would find it difficult to match the kind of capital gains he had made when he bought his house in Northumberland Place, which has seen a rise in value of around £250,000. "Basically, Mr Mandelson will be starting again," Mr Ford said.

Should he decide to leave Notting Hill and has around £250,000 to spend, that would pay for a two-bedroom flat in one of the Georgian houses near the Commons.



The Notting Hill house that cost Mr Mandelson his job

## Legal Latin outlawed pro bono publico

By FRANCES GIBBS  
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE legal language and traditions that have characterised civil courts for decades are swept away in new set of rules published today.

On April 26, old terms such as "writ" and "plaintiff" will be replaced by "claim forms" and "claimant". Out will go familiar Latin tags such as *ex parte*, *inter partes* and *in camera*, and in will come "with notice", "without notice" and "in private". The court will give its "permission" rather than "leave" and the distinguished

### JUSTICE THE MODERN WAY

writ	claim form
pleading	statement of case
plaintiff	claimant
minor infant	child
in camera	in private
ex parte	without notice
inter partes	with notice
next friend/guardian ad litem	litigation friend
Mareva	freezing injunction

Anton Piller order will turn into a plain old search order.

The 800-page document published by the Lord Chancellor's Department also aban-

dons old traditions to lay down new procedures giving judges an active role in managing cases and dictating the pace of litigation.

There will also be a new multi-track dispute system with cases allocated according to their complexity and how much money is at stake.

But solicitors are starting to panic over the tight timescale, which gives them only 60 working days to get to grips with the new system.

The rules were published in their final form for the first time on the Lord Chancellor's Department Website last week and today they will be available as a £250 book from the Stationery Office. The Office is expecting hundreds of orders and there are already fears

that it will be unable to meet demand.

Frances McCarthy, vice president of the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers, said: "People are getting anxious and a little panicky. There is a very large amount of information to get through - and the point is that it is all starting afresh, chucking out all the existing rules."

Dave McNeill, Law Society spokesman, said: "It will be quite a struggle", but he did not expect chaos on April 26, so long as solicitors, barristers, judges and court staff "pulled very hard together".

### Head Over Heels

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# Follow the Primarolo Rule and keep your insults general

Maybe Gordon Brown is just a morning person. Maybe commentators on his grumpiness overlook the simple fact that the Chancellor doesn't do afternoons.

The thought was prompted by an astonishingly cocky performance from Mr Brown at Treasury Questions yesterday — the first time in memory that they have been held before lunch. The change is a small revolution for MPs and journalists. We are used to seeing these sessions conducted

in a heavy-eyed, post-lunch haze: the time when a little afternoon snooze beckons — to some MPs, irresistibly. Even awake, few of us are at our best. The atmosphere is often leaden, the exchanges tetchy or dull. Everyone has noticed the difference morning makes. But with none is the contrast more marked than Gordon Brown.

After morning coffee yesterday, he looked around the chamber, and — yes! Those heavy features quivered, like porridge coming to the boil.

and then cracked open into a grin. Few have seen Mr Brown grin before. As Tony Blair grows more defensive, Gordon Brown seems to be cheering up. Curious. The grin persisted. Brown was in hugely confident form.

Within minutes he ripped into the Liberal Democrats, accusing their Treasury spokesman, Malcolm Bruce, of false accounting. Mr Bruce actually welcomed Brown's spending plans. "I'm not going to take any lectures from Liberal Democrats," he

roared, to a tremendous cheer from Labour. Brown grinned again. So much for demagoguery. The spring never left his step. The Tories, their Treasury spokesmen all lined up with little cue-cards and folders — earnest and devilishly clever questions, far too long, written or typed neatly — never made him sweat, though on

paper Brown's Tory Shadow, Francis Maude, had him cornered on whether he was planning for sterling to shadow the euro. Unassailable, this Treasury team are not unassailable. Brown is smart. Barbara Roche is steady. Alan Milburn is a posh Geriatric smartypants. Patricia Hewitt recites pap as though she

were a special-needs teacher, and MPs her remedial reading class. And to Dawn Primarolo we return in a moment.

There are coconuts here waiting for Tories to take aim. But where are they? Yesterday there were just 16 present for Treasury Questions, the first of 1999. And not a single woman. On the Labour side there were 52 backbenchers, including ten women. Three of the five Treasury ministers were women. "Stupid woman!" shouted Conservative spokesman Nick Gibb at the new

Paymaster General, Dawn Primarolo. It is true that Ms Primarolo is, fairly, evidently, a woman; it is also arguable that she was floundering under cross-examination by Tory spokesman John Wittingdale, and it is undeniable that if this sketch were to call Mr Gibb a stupid man he might be offended, but not on behalf of the whole male sex. So Labour's fury seemed unfair.

Life, however, is unfair. And Madam Speaker is a woman. She hit the roof. "I believe you insulted half this na-

tion's population," yelled Betty Boothroyd at the hapless Gibb, "and I am one of them!" Gibb apologised mightily last. Perhaps this went to Primarolo's head. Minutes later she accused the last Government of "verging on dishonesty". The Chair ordered her to withdraw. Primarolo explained she meant the Government in general, "not any individual". Following what we may now call the Primarolo Rule, Mr Gibb would be well advised in future to shout in her direction: "stupid womankind".



MATTHEW PARRIS  
POLITICAL SKETCH

## Senior Tories attack Hague

By ROLAND WATSON

WILLIAM Hague came under fire from two Tory elder statesmen yesterday as the party reacted badly to evidence that it had again failed to capitalise on Tony Blair's Christmas troubles.

Michael Heseltine warned that leading Tories along with businessmen were being driven out of the party over Mr Hague's "incomprehensible" European policy.

In a separate attack, Kenneth Clarke cautioned the party against believing it could close the gap on Labour by relying on a new breed of spin-doctors.

The twin criticism came the day after the latest Mori poll in *The Times* showed the Tories have fallen further behind Labour despite the Government's "black Christmas". Their comments are likely to re-fuel the internal Tory debate about the influence of Cabinet right-wingers.

Ann Widdecombe tried to calm Tory jitters yesterday, saying that "the steadiness of nerves" was required rather than a rush of "quick fixes".

"If we show steady nerve, there will be everything to play for," she told a Westminster lunch.

Peter Riddell, page 13  
Mary Ann Sieghart, page 24

## Blair commits Britain to the euro dream

By CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS AND PHILIP WEBSTER

TONY BLAIR will today sign up to a pan-European election manifesto that strongly praises the euro and commits the Government to trimming the veto in EU policy-making and Labour to ending "harmful tax competition".

The Prime Minister travels to Vienna for a meeting of European socialist party leaders to endorse a programme primarily drafted by Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, blending standard new Labour goals with the pro-European rhetoric of continental leftists.

Mr Blair's stance provoked Tory accusations last night that he was "selling Britain short".

The manifesto, for the June elections to the European Parliament, unites Labour and the 19 other social democrat parties of the EU in 21 pledges for "a new beginning for the European Union".

But unlike previous European election manifestos, which carried British reservations, Labour has inserted no qualifications over the single currency and had embraced the mainstream thinking of the left-wing parties that now run 11 of the EU's 15 governments.

The draft says: "The euro should make a significant con-

tribution to promoting sustainable growth, low inflation and high levels of employment. It is in the interest of all member states, whether members of the single currency or not, that the euro is a success. A sound euro will protect Europe against the destabilising pressures of currency speculation, allow for lower interest rates and contribute to a reformed and more stable financial world system.

"It will also increase the purchasing power of the consumer through greater price stability, reduced costs for business and improve competition... We commit ourselves to ensuring that the single currency achieves a smooth introduction and provides growth, employment and stability."

In recent weeks Mr Cook has been portrayed as wanting the Government to take a more positive stance on joining the euro in the run-up to the next election, and the manifesto is one of most unequivocal endorsements of the single currency yet given by the Government.

However, the Government's policy of ruling out British membership of the euro before the next Parliament is not about to change and Mr Cook

has told friends that he is not seeking a change in the policy.

Attacking the manifesto passages on the euro, the veto and tax harmonisation, the Tories last night accused Mr Blair of selling Britain short in Europe. Michael Trend, the shadow European Minister, said: "Time and time again they have given the British public false assurances. When speaking at home Tony Blair claims he is standing up for Britain. But when seated round the discussion tables of Europe, Labour are carried by the left-wing tide."

The document was drawn up by Mr Cook and Henri Lancelot of the French Socialist Party. Adopting the slogan of Lionel Jospin, the French Prime Minister, it says: "We say yes to a market economy, but 'no' to a market society."

John Gummer, the former Tory Cabinet minister, said yesterday that Britain would lose all influence over what happened in Europe if it stayed outside the single currency. Mr Gummer, one of the few euro-enthusiasts on the Tory benches, also accused Rupert Murdoch of encouraging his newspapers to set an anti-European agenda rather than report what was actually happening.



By MARCUS BINNEY

## Hoo's got a bargain?

LUTON HOO, the most magnificent Edwardian stately home in Britain, has been sold to an anonymous buyer after languishing on the market for nearly two years. The price is believed to be well under the original asking price of £25 million for the house.

Luton Hoo formed the spectacular backdrop to the closing scene in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. The original Robert Adam house was handily remodelled early this century by the architect Meves & Davis who designed the Ritz Hotel in Piccadilly.

Interested parties are believed to have included the Crown Prince of Kuwait and

the German businessman Dieter Klostermann, whose CCA Group runs Brompton Hall as a conference centre. Also mentioned are Bill Gates who last year was part of an investment consortium that bought out Cliveden plc.

The magnificent Wren collection, previously housed at Luton Hoo, is likely to go on display at Somerset House in London.

as low as £8 million. The enormous asking price matched the debts left by Nicholas Phillips, the owner of the estate, who committed suicide in 1991 after a scheme to build a business park on the estate collapsed.

## Jet lands on watchdog's desk

By ROLAND WATSON AND JILL SHERMAN

THE public-spending watchdog was last night called in to investigate ministers' travel expenses after Gordon Brown refused to say whether he had cost taxpayers £18,000 by chartering a jet.

Francis Maude, the Shadow Chancellor, referred the matter to the National Audit Office as Downing Street tried to head off a growing row by saying the Government spent less on ministerial travel than the Tories had done in office.

Sir John Bourn, the Comptroller and Auditor General, is now likely to investigate the whole issue of government

travel expenses in the wake of a spate of revelations about ministers' spurious subsonic travel to fly by Concorde.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said the concentration of media attention on such issues was becoming "ridiculous" and that it would be up to ministers individually to decide whether to answer such inquiries.

The Treasury stonewalled on claims that Mr Brown had chartered a jet from Africa to Bangkok to travel from a Commonwealth ministers meeting to talks on the South East Asian economic crisis. A

spokesman said: "Our ministers take the view that we are not going into detail of travel arrangements, they have to get from A to B frequently all around the world and that is done in the quickest and most efficient way possible."

The Treasury's stance was undermined when Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, released a blow-by-blow account of his time in Barbados in November to attend the Commonwealth health ministers meeting. Dismissing media inquiries as the stuff of gossip, Mr Dobson insisted he was right to attend, swapping thoughts

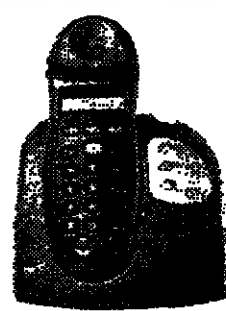
with his counterparts on combating malaria and AIDS.

He said: "I travelled business class both ways and stayed at the conference hotel. On the trip out, I re-drafted our White Paper on tobacco. I slept all night on the way back." He added that he had left a day early.

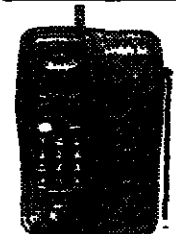
Mr Dobson's statement was an example of what No 10 promised would be an "aggressive" response to the issue, which had flared into life with tales of high living at five-star hotels by Jack Cunningham, the Prime Minister's so-called Cabinet "enforcer".

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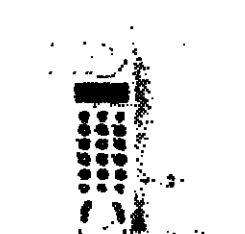
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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Teacher cleared of indecent assault

A teacher at an independent girls' school accused of having an affair with a 14-year-old pupil was cleared yesterday of indecent assault. Daniel August, 54, a father of two, of Leptonstone, East London, hugged his second wife, a former pupil at the school, after he was acquitted of all five charges after two hours' deliberation by a jury at Southwark Crown Court. He was alleged to have had illicit sex with the girl between January 1985 and June 1996.

He admitted that he and Miss X, who is now 28, had an affair but said that it started after she completed her A levels and was about to go to university. He was confronted with the allegations last April and was immediately suspended from the school, where he had taught for 25 years.

### Battery hen cage ban

Battery hen cages could be abolished throughout Europe after the European Parliament voted yesterday to ban their use by January 1, 2009. Almost 90 per cent of British eggs come from battery hens, and the percentage is higher in the EU. Although government ministers can ignore the Parliament's wishes, the vote by MEPs will greatly increase the moral pressure for battery cages to be phased out. Egg producers said they would demand compensation if they were forced to switch to more expensive free-range systems.

### NUT goes for a zone

The National Union of Teachers announced plans to apply to join forces with the Oxfordshire Education Authority in running one of the Government's Education Action Zones. The move is a radical departure for the union, many of whose members view business involvement in the zones as a form of creeping privatisation. At a conference on the zones, Doug McAvoey, the NUT general secretary, said the union's involvement would act as a bulwark against government efforts to sideline local education authorities.

### Adams up for the Cup

Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin leader, will be among the fans from Northern Ireland watching Ulster play the French team Colonniers in the final of rugby union's European Cup in Dublin tomorrow, his party confirmed. David Trimble, First Minister of Northern Ireland, and Seamus Mallon, Deputy First Minister, are also expected to be at the match, which has attracted huge interest. Support for the Ulster team crosses the sectarian divide. Mo Mowlam and Mary McAleese, the Irish President, will be in the crowd.

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# Husband tells of lover's fatal attraction

## 'Jenny grabbed me by the hand and led me upstairs'

THE husband of Kathryn Linaker, who was killed and buried in a drama society, told a court yesterday of his sex sessions with the woman who killed her.

Chris Linaker, 35, a former computer trainer, said at Chester Crown Court that he fell in love with Jenny Cupit, 24, a fellow actor at a local drama society, and that they enjoyed a passionate relationship for more than a year.

They would meet regularly to have sex at each other's homes in Warrington, Cheshire, in the houses of friends and relatives. In the open air in Delamere Forest and Alton Towers and once in a multi-storey car park in Blackpool. They filmed themselves in one daytime encounter in a hotel room and, on at least two occasions, indulged in sexual threesomes, once with Mr Linaker's brother-in-law Neil Allcock while Mrs Linaker was out at work and with Cupit's husband, Nick.

The court heard that Mr Linaker had been pestering his lover to set up a threesome with herself and female friend but this date was abandoned when it clashed with the birth of his second child, Holly.

As the affair continued in a welter of love letters, snatched telephone calls and Valentine cards, Cupit began urging Mr Linaker to leave his wife and two children and run off with her to Canada. He became concerned that she would tell his wife about their affair.

Cupit, a hairdresser, is alleged to have murdered Mrs Linaker, 33, in a fit of jealous rage last April at her home in Penketh, Warrington, stabbing and clubbing her to death with a kitchen knife, a carving knife and a heavy bottle.

She denies murdering Mrs Linaker, a deputy headmistress at St James School in Haydock, and an author of educational guides, but has pleaded guilty to manslaughter due to diminished responsibility, a plea contested by the Crown.

Mr Linaker told the court, under questioning from Alex Carline QC for the prosecution, that it was Cupit who took the lead in their affair.

He and his wife, then a successful teacher, met through the Warrington Centenary Operatic and Dramatic Society, which became the hub of their social lives, through which they met others in their circle, including Nick and Jenny Cupit. The two couples, who both had young children, be-



Chris Linaker, Cupit's lover, videotaped their three-in-a-bed sex session in the spare bedroom with Neil Allcock, below



came friends. They had known each other for a "few years" before his wife's death, he said. Mr Carline asked Mr Linaker, who worked as a computer trainer, whether the relationship between his wife and Cupit was one where intimate confidences would be expected to be exchanged. He replied: "No."

Mr Linaker admitted that he began the affair with Cupit early in 1997. She told him that she had feelings for someone in the drama society and, within seconds, had admitted it was him. He insisted that he told her it was not a good idea to take their relationship further.

Mr Linaker said he first had sex with the young mother of two in January 1997 when he

went to her house in Orford, near Warrington, during the day. She had sex in her bedroom.

"We were talking in the kitchen and Jenny Cupit put her coffee down, grabbed me by the hand and took me upstairs," he said. Mr Carline observed that "it does not seem as if you protested too much."

They had sex often, more than weekly. They made love at their houses, at the homes of Cupit's in-laws, at her friend home. In the open air in the Delamere Forest, beside the theme park at Alton Towers and once in a multi-storey car park on a day trip to Blackpool. Once Cupit booked a hotel room at the Novotel, off the M6 on the way to Swinton, Manchester, where they met and made love several times.

Mr Linaker admitted that, at his instigation, he videotaped themselves having sex using his father's camera. Mr Carline asked: "What was Jenny's reaction? Did she raise any objection at all?" He replied: "No."

Mr Carline asked: "Was there any other occasion when you videotaped yourself and Jenny having sexual intercourse together?" "At my home," replied Mr Linaker. "I had shown any reluctance to have it videotaped on that occasion?" "Not at all," Mr Carline asked. "Did she watch it?" "Yes, with me," The barrister continued: "What was her reaction to watching you and her having sexual intercourse?" Mr Linaker replied: "She found it exciting."

Cupit, from the dock, interjected: "You liar." Mr Linaker described two occasions when they invited a third man to join them for sex. He said that Cupit made it clear that a threesome was one of her fantasies so he invited his brother-in-law, Neil Allcock, to join them.

They met on a weekday at his home while Mrs Linaker was working at school. The



Jenny Cupit, accused of murdering her lover's wife, leaving court yesterday. She made first move in an affair that led to death, the jury was told

threesome videotaped the hour-long encounter from a camera set up on a tripod in the corner of the spare bedroom. Mr Linaker said Cupit had oral sex with both men. When they replayed the tape, she seemed to enjoy it, he said.

In early 1998 Mr Linaker went to Cupit's home in Warrington for another threesome; this time with her husband Nick. The three had sex while the couple's two children were asleep upstairs. During the relationship she spoke of her desire for him to father her child. She was distressed when her family doctor told her she had miscarried after a short pregnancy. Later, it emerged that Cupit was upset when she discovered Kathryn Linaker was pregnant with baby Holly. Mr Carline asked: "Did Jenny ever express feelings towards your wife Kathryn?" "Yes," replied Mr Linaker. "She was jealous. The main reason was she was my partner. Kathryn was the one I went home to, spent weekends with; that sort of thing."

Mr Linaker said that his wife had warned him that she felt Cupit might "move in on him". Once Cupit arrived unannounced at their detached home where she assured Mrs Linaker that she had no such

intention. The conversation left Kathy confused, said Mr Linaker.

Mr Linaker said there had been an incident in an unlit Warrington street in March last year which upset Cupit. She said that she had been attacked by a man who grabbed her from behind, torn her blouse and put his hand down her trousers. He had believed her at first but later was not so sure, he told the court.

Mr Linaker said that he had bought Cupit a vibrator as a sex toy at a shop in Manchester. She appeared thrilled with it, he said, and they had used on "a few occasions".

Mr Linaker said that several weeks before his wife's death Cupit appeared more aggressive and angry.

During cross-examination Adrian Fulford, QC, for the defence, suggested that Mr Linaker was drawn to Cupit for sexual reasons. He described Mr Linaker as a man with a taste for pornography,

videos and sex aids and that he had kept up the affair, right up until the day before his wife's death, for his own sexual gratification.

Mr Linaker agreed that in one card he had written: "To the sexiest, tastiest most unnecessarily insecure woman I know and I know you very much, your special friend."

Mr Fulford asked: "At the same time you told her over and over again you loved her, when she asked you seriously if you would leave your family, you didn't answer immediately. You paused before you said no as if you were thinking about it seriously?" "No," replied Mr Linaker. "I paused because I was taken aback."

Mr Carline asked: "Was it discussed from time to time?" Mr Linaker replied: "Regularly in letters she used to send me." The barrister went on: "Did you ever lead her to believe you would leave your wife?" Mr Linaker said: "No."

The trial continues.



Kathryn Linaker warned her husband about Cupit

### 'MY FEELINGS ARE MORE THAN SEXUAL'

The jury was shown the only handwritten letter that Mr Linaker sent to his lover, although he received many from her.

It began: "I have finally done it. I have put pen to paper. I am not sure what to write, of course..." But he goes on to say he loves her, misses her and that she was assured a special place in his heart: "My feelings for you are more than just sexual," he wrote. "I am sure it should please you thinking of me doing naughty things to myself while thinking of you. I am certainly making up new ways of making love to you in my mind... In the beginning the thought of somebody like you finding me attractive, I found incredibly erotic. Since then I have grown to love you."

It was signed: "I love you always, Your friend"

## Art academy's 'public face' blames lover for sacking

BY DIANA BLAMIRE

A PROMOTIONS manager at the Royal Academy of Art was sacked after an affair with her boss ended, an industrial tribunal heard yesterday.

Miriam Sassoon, described as the gallery's public face, was said to have been "bullied and shouted at" by Zack Malcolmson.

Miss Sassoon, who was subcontracted to run promotions for exhibitions at the academy, said that her life was made hell by her former lover. He demeaned her in front of colleagues and gave her a written warning when she complained about him, she said.

The 24-year-old was sacked last August for "unprofessional behaviour" when she objected to the warning. Her employers say that she started a whispering campaign against Malcolmson and called him a bastard in front of staff.

Miss Sassoon told the Central London Tribunal that Mr Malcolmson, the academy's London site manager, forced her to apologise to a colleague who had made her cry, snubbed her at company



Malcolmson and Sassoon: had an affair, tribunal told

drinks evenings and ignored her views, even when they were conducting joint interviews.

She is claiming sexual discrimination against Arts Communications and Technology, which employed her and Mr Malcolmson. The company was used by the Royal Academy to produce its exhibitions and to produce audio guides.

Her role was to promote CD-Roms and audio-guides. Visitors to exhibitions would see her to acquire the guides.

Miss Sassoon said: "When I first joined the company, Zack

would not speak to me, but he was friendly to everyone else.

"My brother died that year and I had a few days off work. He started to talk to me after that."

The couple started a relationship eight months after she joined the company. Miss Sassoon told the tribunal: "We slept together in Christmas 1997. In late March, Zack and myself went to Amsterdam and, about three weeks later, I ended the relationship because we weren't communicating. We tried to be friends thereafter, but Zack took to ig-

noring me." After that, Miss Sassoon said, Mr Malcolmson picked faults with everything she did.

"I was shouted at and bullied and told I was behaving unprofessionally. I put in a grievance which was ignored and was given a written warning for unprofessional behaviour."

"At one point he called me unprofessional in front of staff at the Royal Academy and in front of other promoters, which obviously upset me. It was bombastic."

Naomi Ellenbogen, representing Arts Communications and Technology, said: "The reason she got a written warning was for smoking outside the gallery, conducting a whispering campaign against Mr Malcolmson and shouting and swearing at him at company parties."

She told Miss Sassoon: "You were the face of the company which the public first meet when they walk in the gallery. It was essential that you behave in a professional manner."

The case was adjourned until April 22.

## PC arrested brother in toy feud

BY PETER FOSTER

A POLICEMAN arrested his brother for swearing after a ten-year disagreement over a rare Dinky toy reached boiling point, a court was told yesterday.

PC Roy Lewis-Tatton, 33, arrested his brother Paul, 39, after a row last October. Nottingham magistrates dismissed the case after hearing of the feud. They heard that the pair had hardly spoken since the day Paul Tatton accused Roy, a toy collector, of trying to trick his son into parting with the valuable toy in exchange for a cheap Action Man.

On the night of his arrest, Paul Tat-

ton told the court, PC Lewis-Tatton had arrived at his house in Nottingham alleging that he, Paul, had assaulted his 18-year-old son, Carl. The teenager told the court that his uncle had offered to change his father with assault, but he had declined. He added that his uncle had seemed intent on getting his father charged. "My dad had just been trying to restrain me in the house because of my temper. I was just angry. My father hadn't really hit me."

Paul Tatton said his younger brother then turned to go back to the patrol car, saying that there was a difference between "chastisement and assault" and

promising that "the next time I will personally come and arrest you". Paul said he was arrested after he tried to explain that he had not assaulted his son. At this point, the court heard, PC Lewis-Tatton handcuffed his brother and bundled him into the car, telling him he was being arrested for aggressive and abusive behaviour towards a police officer. Yesterday Paul Tatton said that he believed the row over the Thunderbirds 2 spaceship, worth an estimated £200, was the real reason for his arrest.

Finding Paul Tatton not guilty of using threatening behaviour, magistrates also awarded him £1,000 costs.

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# Trimble demands action over Collins

Government is urged not to turn a blind eye after IRA informer's murder, reports Martin Fletcher

DAVID TRIMBLE accused the IRA yesterday of breaking its ceasefire by murdering Eamon Collins, the IRA informer. He demanded that the Government take action.

Chief Inspector Eddie Graham, who is leading the murder investigation, said that Collins had suffered an "horrendous death". His injuries were so appalling that the police advised his widow, Bernice, not to view the body.

"It is more akin to a crime indicative of that carried out by primitive savages than it is of a society entering the 21st century. It was absolutely dreadful," he said. Collins was killed on a country lane near his home in Newry before dawn on Wednesday. He died from multiple stab wounds and bludgeoning of the head.

"It's fairly clear who murdered him — presumably the

same people who burnt his house and were responsible for the hit-and-run attack on him a couple of years ago, and that is the IRA and particularly the South Armagh IRA," said Mr Trimble, Northern Ireland's First Minister.

"This is yet another breach of the ceasefire and I wonder what the Secretary of State is going to say about it... It's important the Government shows through its actions that it is not turning a blind eye."

Mr Trimble would not specify what he wanted the Government to do, but on Wednesday night he backed an unsuccessful Conservative motion to halt terrorist prisoner releases until IRA violence stopped. Other senior Unionists said that the murder had strengthened the case for barring Sinn Féin from government until the IRA began disarming.



Collins: he died from multiple stab wounds

Mrs Collins told yesterday's *Irish News*: "They finally got him." Her husband had got up at 4.30am to paint over hostile graffiti near their house before taking his dogs for a walk. "I knew when I got up and Eamon wasn't there. I just got a knot in my stomach."

"Although you knew there was always the possibility it could happen, and you felt you were prepared for it, you just can't be... We had talked about the escalation in the in-

timidation, and it wasn't just aimed at him. It was aimed at the whole family.

"We had talked of moving elsewhere, if only for the children's sake."

Collins, who will be buried today, told the *Belfast News Letter* the day before his death that he had terminal heart disease. "I don't know what will kill me first — my enemies or my illness," he said.

Gerry Adams, Sinn Féin's president, called the murder "regrettable".

He said that Collins had "many enemies in many, many, many places", but insisted that republicans felt no sense of triumph at his killing. Terry Madden, 52, a charity worker from Monasteraden in Sligo, died from gunshot wounds to his legs yesterday, in what appears to be the first punishment killing in the Irish Republic since the 1994 IRA ceasefire.

In Dungannon, Co Tyrone, a Roman Catholic family escaped injury when a pipe-bomb was thrown through their kitchen window.



Michelle Cadwell, left, and Kate Brown get reading as the first books arrive

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Trial date for murder charge GP

A family doctor charged with killing eight female patients was yesterday committed for trial on two alleged murders. Harold Shipman, 52, of Salford in Longdendale, Greater Manchester, is charged with murdering Jean Lilley, 39, in April 1997, and Irene Turner, 67, in July 1996.

He is scheduled to appear at Manchester Crown Court on March 1 for a plea and directions hearing on all the charges against him. Mr Shipman, who has a practice in Hyde, has already pleaded not guilty to the murders of four former patients.

### Killer gets life

A killer trapped by his ear-piercing was jailed for life by an Old Bailey judge for raping and strangling a woman. Killian, 22, in Erith, southeast London, Karl Stirk, 26, had listened at a window before breaking into her flat.

### Pots of money

A collection of more than 120 cookery books dating from the early 1600s fetched £59,000 at Sotheby's in London. It included a rare, 1861 first edition of Mrs Beeton's *Book of Household Management*, which sold for £1,200.

### Doorstep killing

A teenager shot dead after answering the door may have been mistaken for another man. Leon McKinlay, 18, of Old Trafford, Manchester, was hit several times in the chest. Police said victim may have known the real target.

### Protester evicted

Margaret Jones, 49, the university lecturer who gave up her job to join anti-roads protesters, has been evicted from a warehouse where she was single-handedly holding up work on the £30 million Avon ring road at Warmley, near Bristol.

### Carey's mission

The Archbishop of Canterbury is in Damascus for the first visit by a head of the Anglican Church to Syria. "I am convinced the world needs deepening relationships between Christianity and Islam," Dr George Carey said.

### Meningitis death

Paul Caffrey, 12, has died after contracting meningitis on an adventure training course in North Wales. Seventeen fellow pupils from Widnes, Cheshire, who shared his dormitory are receiving antibiotics.

### Hands-on chief

Norman Bettison, 42, the Chief Constable of Merseyside, leapt from his official car after an awards ceremony to chase and help to arrest a suspected thief that he saw fleeing from a shop's security guard.

### Chilly landing

Shetland bird-lovers hope to send a cattle egret, which has been found 2,000 miles north of its usual habitat, back to the Algarve. The birds have visited southern England, but have never been seen in Shetland.

## CORRECTION

Yale University's collection of British art was donated by Paul Mellon and not by Paul Getty as stated in an article (January 27) on Denver Art Museum.

Token, page 49

## Children see their tokens bear fruit

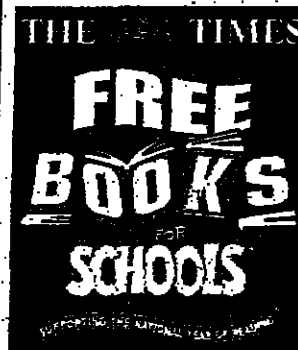
By HANNAH BETTS

THE first delivery in the Free Books for Schools scheme was met with delight at Westcroft Special School in Wolverhampton yesterday. Children mobbed the delivery man and tore open the boxes in a race to be first to their new books.

See Commander, the school's literacy co-ordinator, said: "Now that they're all pulling together to collect tokens, our children think of reading as a real pleasure."

Most of the tokens have come from the children themselves. Pupils are keen to gather up tokens from their parents' newspapers, many coming in with fistfuls at a time.

James Lawrence, 12, said:



"The books you are giving us are better than we had before and more fun in lessons. We are doing more reading every day." Miss Commander said her pupils had been swept into a collecting frenzy after their appearance in *The Times* earlier this month for being the first school to place an order. Since then, Westcroft has amassed 3,000 tokens.

Can your school beat the token-saving total of Westcroft? Call *The Times* Free Books for Schools hotline and tell us about your school's progress on 0171-895-9018 (office hours only). Throughout February, 223 Asda stores will be doubling all Free Books for Schools tokens as customers pass through the checkout.

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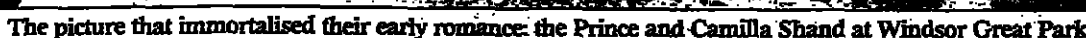






By ALAN HAMILTON

Mrs Parker Bowles has been remarkably tolerant of the cameramen who regularly stake out the hunt, but they



to allow the cameramen a good view of her revealing green silk and velvet outfit, her dazzling hairdo, and her sapphire and diamond jewelry ensemble.

A few days earlier, she had attended a birthday function for the Prince at Hampton Court Palace, and although she danced with her beau in front of his sons, she came and went with the utmost discretion by a side entrance.

The same discretion was employed last October when the

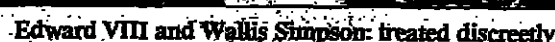
couple attended the society wedding of Santa Palmer-Tomkinson at a North London synagogue. They arrived half an hour apart, sat in different rows during the service, and left in separate motorcades for the same destination—a reception at the Ritz. Once again the photographers were cheated of the one picture to die for, the one with a guaranteed sale to newspapers and magazines around the world. Once again, they would have to wait to make their fortunes.



The foreign press, however, were having a field day. When Mrs Simpson's divorce petition was moved from London to Ipswich in the hope that no one would notice the hearing, British newspapers blandly reported a list of names, while one American journal shouted from a banner headline: "King's Mother Reno'd in Wolsey's Home Town"

Edward VII had the good fortune to have an understanding wife in Queen Alexandra, who would never have dreamt of whingeing to the media about an overcrowded marriage. Besides, he was an avuncular fellow, admired for taking care of his past amours long after the passion had died.

While the present Prince of Wales has been at pains to keep his relationship with Alice Keppel's great-great-granddaughter in the shadows, his predecessor did much to push Mrs. Simpson to the fore. When she visited Balmoral her name, at his insistence, appeared in the Court Circular.



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Korda in legal fight to escape ban over drug test

By JOHN GOODSON  
SPORTS NEWS  
CORRESPONDENT

PETR KORDA, the Czech tennis star, should not be forced to defend himself twice against doping allegations, the High Court in London was told yesterday.

Korda, the 1996 Australian Open champion, wants Mr Justice Lightman to stop the International Tennis Federation appealing against the decision of a tribunal not to ban him. The player tested positive for an anabolic steroid after losing to Tim Henman at Wimbledon last year.

The Czech player, who was not in court, escaped a one-year ban in December when the committee, appointed by the federation, ruled that there were "exceptional circumstances". Korda claimed that he did not know how the drug was present in his urine sample, an explanation that allowed him to get off on a technicality.

The federation wants to impose a ban by taking the case to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, which deals with complex drugs issues. Korda, who had been injured before Wimbledon, was found positive for nandrolone, the same steroid found last week in the urine of Doug Walker, the European 200 metres champion.

Charles Flint, QC, for Korda, said that the federation, under its own doping regulations, had no right in law to appeal against the decision, which was "final and binding" on both sides. "We say that argument is incompatible with the wording of the anti-doping programme."

"The programme is designed to provide for speedy and final determination of disputes as to allegations of doping before an independent expert committee." The judge is expected to give his verdict this afternoon.

# Spice girls of tennis take a beating

The pretty young things are finding it tough against a hard-hitting newcomer, reports Alix Ramsay



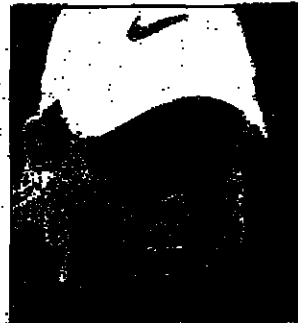
Martina Hingis, the next to take on Mauresmo

**MARTINA HINGIS**  
Born: 1978, Lugano, Switzerland  
Height: 5'7" Weight: 110 lb  
Career: 19 Grand Slam singles titles  
Career earnings: \$2,365,406 (£5.1 million)  
Coach: her mother, Melanie Hingis, former Czech No 10  
Hobbies: skiing, ice skating, soccer, basketball, swimming, shopping and going to musicals

**AMELIE MAURESMO**  
Born: 1979, Poitiers, France  
Height: 5'10" Weight: 130 lb  
Career: 1 Grand Slam singles title  
Career earnings: \$1,170,000 (£2.6 million)  
Coach: Guy Forget  
Hobbies: tennis, swimming, shopping, eating



Packing a punch: Mauresmo after beating Lindsay Davenport



Bitter spice: Kournikova, left, Dokic and Pierce cannot match Mauresmo's power

THIS season was supposed to herald the age of the tennis Spice Girls, but after just a fortnight their supremacy is being threatened by ten stone of muscle.

Two weeks ago four bright young Lycra-clad things began the Australian Open. Their leader, Martina Hingis, declared that she and Anna Kournikova were the Spice Girls of tennis. The shapely figures of Venus Williams and Mary Pierce have been similarly touted as giving women's tennis astonishing pulling power, along with the rising star Jelena Dokic, 15, of Australia.

Now only one of the band remains: Hingis will tomorrow defend her title against the relatively unknown and formidably built Frenchwoman Amelie Mauresmo.

The 19-year-old does not quite fit the new mould of women's tennis. But with shoulders that a prop forward would pay money for, there are very few moulds built to accommodate her athletic form.

In the semi-finals she overwhelmed Davenport — and, at 6ft 2in and 124st, the American world No 1 takes some whelming. Mauresmo was too strong, too quick and too determined for one of the most powerful strikers of the ball in the women's game.

Then again, she had the confidence. When asked about the possibility of facing either Davenport or Williams — the other muscular force on the WTA Tour — she announced that she was "the same as them or maybe better".

Davenport was not happy. "The shoulders look huge to me," she said. "A couple of times I thought I was playing a guy she was hitting it so hard. Women's tennis isn't normally played like that."

The chances are, however, that women's tennis will increasingly be played like that, and no one should be less surprised than Davenport.

When Hingis headed for the No 1 spot she did it with nous. Not particularly big or powerful, Hingis thought faster than anyone else could run. Having been trounced, the opposition retreated, regrouped and learned to run that little bit quicker.

Starting to believe in herself, Davenport lost weight, got fit and overtook Hingis. Now Mauresmo has

done the same thing to her and Davenport is not happy.

Not that such backsliding is new in tennis. Margaret Court's emergence was greeted with many a raised eyebrow. Tall, athletic and with a penchant for lifting weights, she scythed through the field to claim 24 Grand Slam singles titles, a record that still stands. When Christine Truman, Britain's 1961 Wimbledon finalist, encountered the all-conquering Australian, she mused on the masculinity of Court's aggressive game.

Twenty years later, Hana Mandlikova had a stand-up row with the muscular Martina Navratilova. Walloped at the French Open, Mandlikova claimed it was "difficult playing against a man — I mean Martina". It took four months and an abject apology before the two were back on speaking terms.

Not that Mauresmo cares what anyone else thinks: in fact, she regards Davenport's comments as something of a compliment. "The fact that I'm strong physically is maybe impressing her," she said.

The world junior champion in 1996, Mauresmo found the step up to the senior game hard. It was, she said, as much mental as physical dealing with the increased workload and the pressure of chasing world-ranking points. So, she learnt how to work harder.

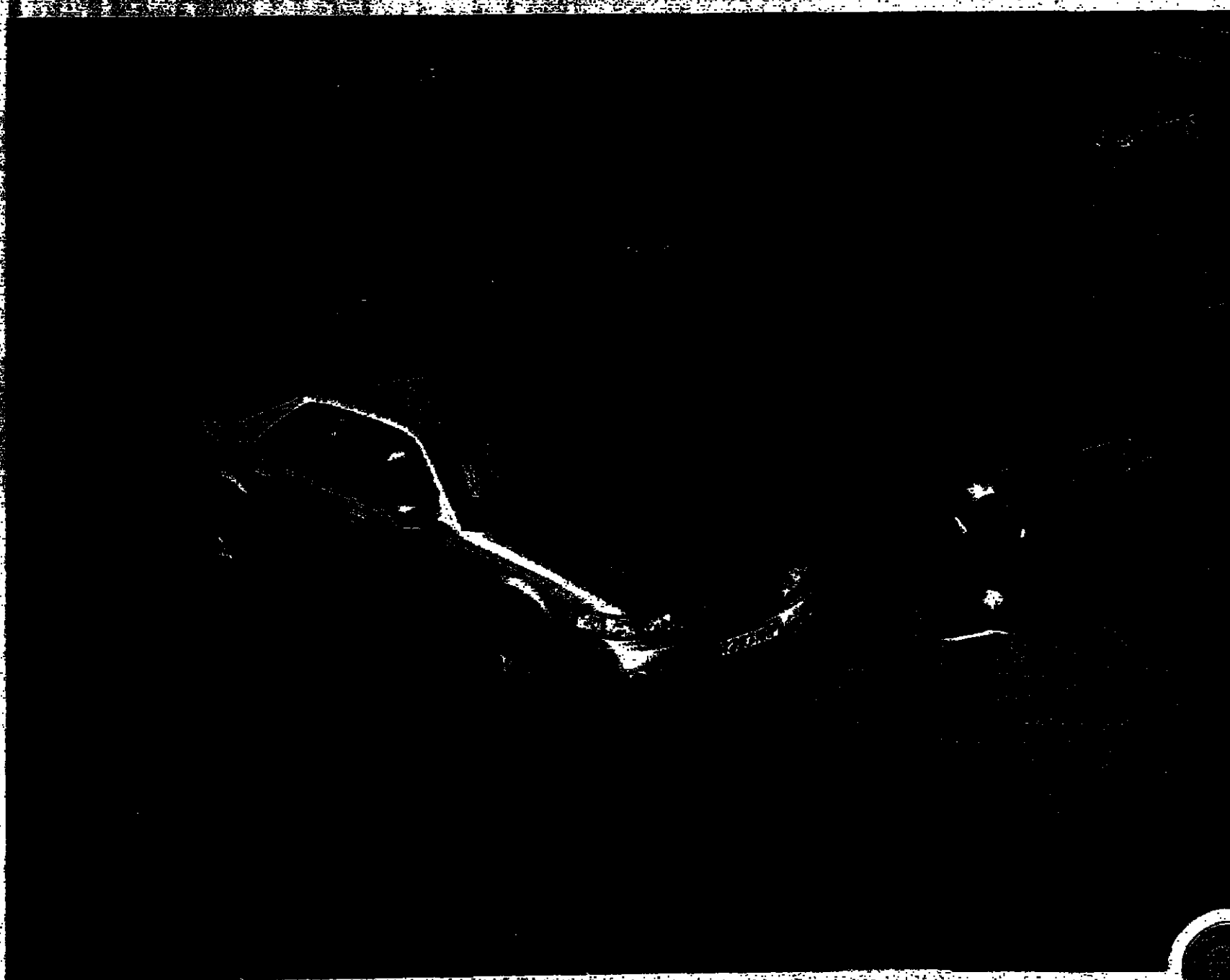
She left the French Federation in 1997 and got herself a new coach in Warwick Bashford. When he took her so far but no further last year, he was replaced by Christophe Fourmerie.

Mauresmo has stated her intention and that is to get to the top. Her spare time is spent pumping iron to make her the strongest player on the circuit and "the one who stays longest on the court". Even her private life is an open book — she lives with her girlfriend in St Tropez.

Now Mauresmo must try to beat Hingis for the first time and even the ever-confident Hingis admits that she has "a winning record but not a very easy one". Like Navratilova v Evert or Seles v Graf, it is a case of brawn against brain, power against finesse. Maybe the marketing men have something to work with after all.

Sport, page 56

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# Violent creed of bouncer turned cleric

## Muslims disown fanatic who shames their faith

BY STEPHEN FARRELL

THE fundamentalist preacher accused by Yemen of organising terrorist attacks from his London mosque was condemned yesterday for tarnishing the image of the Muslim community with his support for violence.

Abu Hamza al-Masri — not his real name — was accused of adopting the title "sheikh" to imply religious qualifications that he does not have and of using his new-found notoriety to influence impressionable youngsters.

Egyptian-born Hamza, 41, used to work as a nightclub bouncer and bodyguard and had an illegitimate child be-

fore gaining British citizenship in 1985 and embracing religion. He claims to have studied civil engineering in Brighton in the early 1980s, but there is no record of that.

Hamza runs Supporters of Shariah, an extremist group dedicated to the rule of Islamic law, by mobile telephone and the Internet, where he attracted attention by offering military training on Web pages depicting a handgun.

He preaches at Finsbury Park Mosque in North London on the need to raise good Muslim families. His own son, Muhammad Kamil Mustapha, 17, was arrested in Yem-

en this week suspected of plotting to bomb British targets.

The boy's mother, Valerie, says that she has never seen him since Hamza, then known as Mustapha Kamil, persuaded her to let him take their son to visit his grandparents in Egypt 12 years ago.

Valerie, who refused to reveal her surname, said that when she married Hamza in 1984, he was not a radical until things went "wrong" and he "started to get more into religion". They divorced and Hamza, who claims to have lost his hands and an eye clearing mines with the Mujahidin in Afghanistan, now lives in West London.

He has a son by another woman, claims disability benefit and moves between addresses. One, a terrace council house in Shepherd's Bush, is distinctive for its shabby appearance and rubbish-strewn garden.

Prominent Muslims are frustrated at the opprobrium Hamza and other fundamentalist advocates of violence have brought on their community from those who know little of Islam except the extremist views they read in newspapers or hear on television.

Hamza supports a holy war to create a worldwide Islamic state. He admits having been in contact with the leader of the group that kidnapped 16 Westerners in Yemen, although he denies planning terrorism.

He also admits previous contact with the extremist Armed Islamic Group, widely believed to have carried out massacres in Algeria, but says he has since distanced himself from it.

Zaki Badawi, principal of the Muslim College in West London, said there was no question of Hamza having attended any of the important religious centres, such as al-Azhar in Cairo, which confer meaningful religious titles.

"Anybody can call them-



Hamza preaches at a London mosque, but fellow Muslims say they are shocked by a gospel of terrorism that runs contrary to the Koran

selves a sheikh. He has no qualifications whatever that we know of," he said.

"The Muslim community is very alarmed. The feeling is that he is giving a repulsive image of Islam. I get so many calls asking me how can we silence this man, but you cannot. It is a democracy."

"He is a complete nobody but anybody making extreme statements like this and looking as appalling as he does attracts people."

Iqbal Sacranie, secretary-general of the Muslim Council of Britain, deplored "fringe elements" granted a high profile for controversial views which had little support among Brit-

ain's two million Muslims. "What really concerns us is when they talk about killing innocent people, hostage-taking and terrorism. This is not what the Koran teaches and the sort of messages they put out shock the Muslim community. It is dangerous because it creates divisions."

Up to 1,000 people are said to attend Hamza's weekly prayer sessions, after which donations are made. It is not uncommon for Muslim businessmen to make single donations of £5,000 to their local mosques. Hamza charges £1 and £5 for audio and video cassettes of his addresses.

Even around Finsbury

Park, he is a controversial figure. Adam Abdullah, a worker at the Muslim Information Centre less than a hundred yards away, chooses to wor-

agree with. We do not support terrorist actions at all," he said.

However, the strength of Hamza's support could be

gauged from two young wor-

shippers who gave him their full support yesterday. They

claimed that the mosque was frequently visited by police

and health inspectors looking

for a pretext to close it down.

Zaidoon Aburejili, 17, a Palestinian, said: "He teaches us the way of Allah, he does not preach about terrorism. It is wrong what they say about him."

"People at the mosque do not like it that so many police come here. How would you like it if somebody went into a church and bothered you when you were praying?"

Toufik, who has prayed at Finsbury Park for a year, said: "Abu Hamza is a good man. He speaks the Koran. What is a terrorist? A terrorist is a man shooting a gun. Abu Hamza does not have any hands. He cannot be a terrorist."

"He is giving a repulsive image of Islam. I get many calls asking how we can silence him, but we cannot."



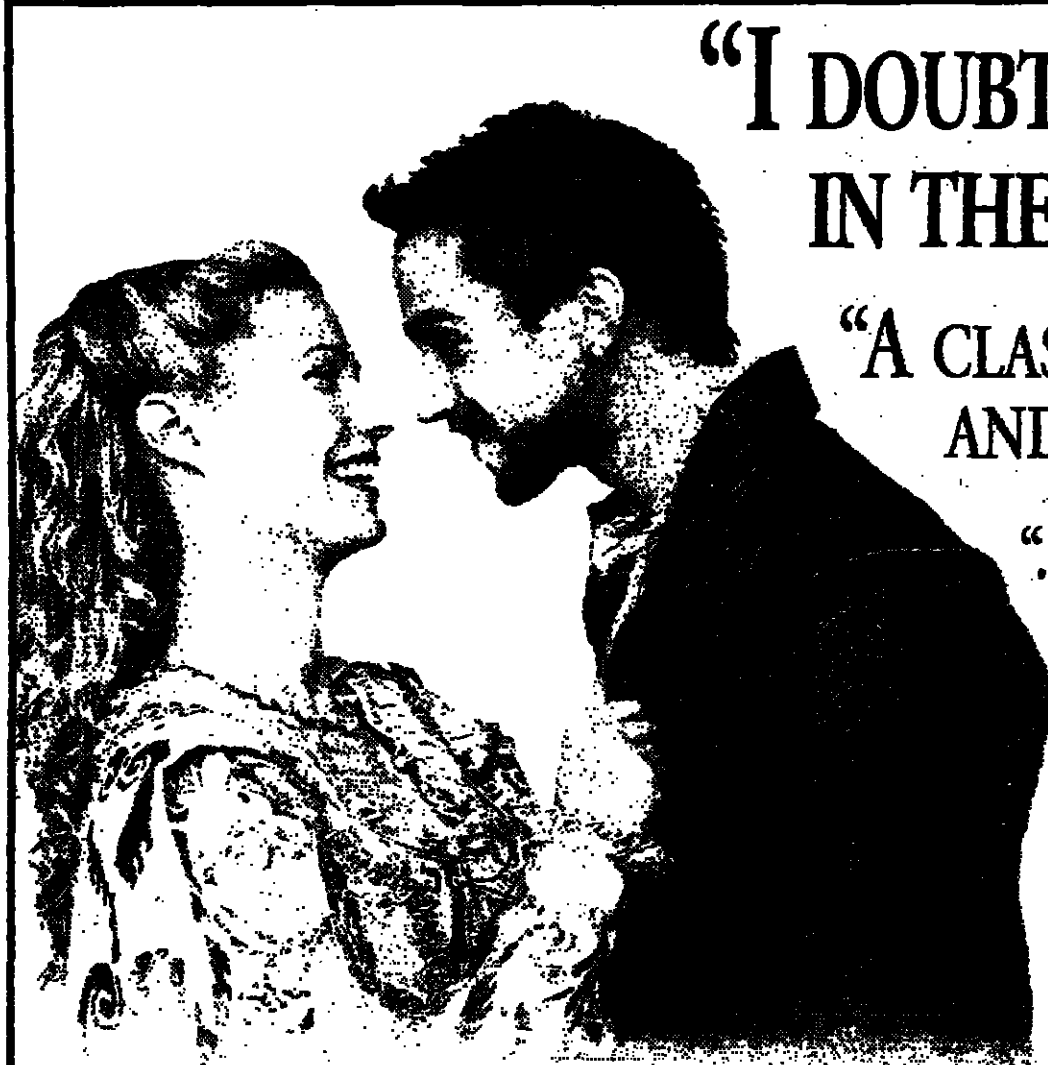
Arrested: Hamza's son, Muhammad Kamil Mustapha

## 3 — GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS — WINNER

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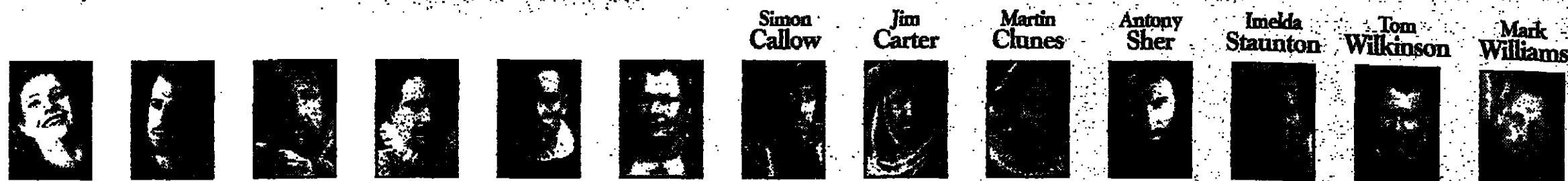
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CHAD LARSEN — SUNDAY TIMES

GWYNETH PALTROW JOSEPH FIENNES GEOFFREY RUSH COLIN FIRTH BEN AFFLECK AND JUDI DENCH

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هكذا من اليمين



55 من الإجمالي

# Tagged offender relishes electronic ball and chain

Prisoners like feeling of freedom — and the Home Office will like the savings, reports Adrian Lee

AT 10am yesterday Simon Hart should have been carrying out mental prison chores. Instead he was climbing into his brother's BMW and making plans to celebrate as he became one of 57 inmates to be released early under a tagging scheme.

For the remaining 60 days of his sentence Hart, 31, must wear the device on his ankle. He is free to work and socialise by day but if he breaks a 7pm-to-7am curfew his tag will alert the authorities.

"It's a bit like having a ball and chain," said Hart, a window cleaner from Sandhurst, Berkshire. "But my freedom is all that matters."

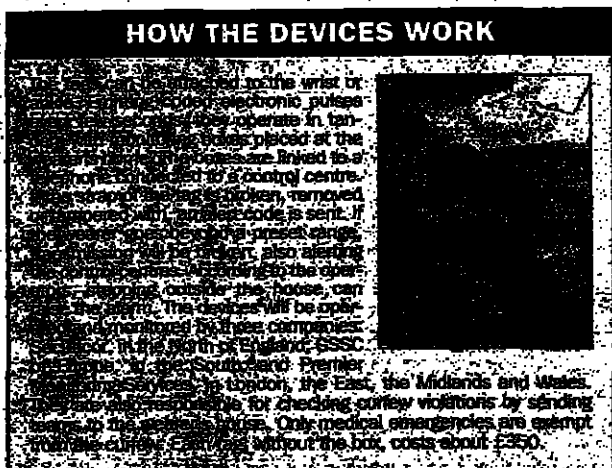
In the next 12 months it is estimated that 30,000 prisoners serving the final stretches of sentences of between three months and four years will be tagged. Hart, who was serving a 15-month sentence at High

Down prison, near Sutton, Surrey, for possessing cannabis, was accepted for tagging after completing five months and two weeks.

The scheme's cost of £35 million a year will easily be offset by savings made from reducing the overcrowded prison population, according to the Home Office.

"Anything that gives me a chance to get out of here is a good idea," Hart said. "The way I look at it is that it is really no different to wearing a watch. It means that I can watch television when I want, have a bath when I want and not have anyone ordering me about for 60 days when I should be in prison." He said he felt no stigma wearing the tag, which can be hidden beneath trousers.

The Home Office said the tags were waterproof and "will not interfere with any lei-



HOW THE DEVICES WORK

sure activity." "I might even go swimming," Hart said. "I don't care who sees it."

Pilot schemes in Manchester, Norfolk and Berkshire were not entirely successful, although eight out of ten prisoners did comply. But Mr Hart said he was confident he would not reoffend and did not believe the strictures of the curfew would be too difficult to bear. "I have reached the age

when I don't mind staying in at night watching TV. My freedom means too much for me to mess it up."

Yesterday, after giving brief interviews at the prison gates, he was driven to his brother's home for a family reunion. After celebrating with a can of lager, he met his probation officer at 12.30pm, then travelled to his parents' home, where he will spend the curfew. On a

typical prison day he would have been woken at 7am, eaten breakfast in his single cell and begun prison work, helping a maintenance team, before 9am. After lunch, between 12.15pm and 2pm, he would return to work before again being locked in his cell at 4.45pm. From 5.45pm, until prisoners are secured for the night at 8.30pm, he would have been permitted to watch television and associate with other prisoners. During that time he might also have taken a shower.

Mr Hart's stable family background and the offer of regular work helped him to secure one of the first places on the scheme, called Home Detention Curfew. More than half the prisoners who applied for tagging at High Down, where there are 775 inmates of categories A to C, were refused following risk assessment checks. The final decision is made by the prison governor and anyone charged with a crime while wearing a tag is liable to recall. To become eligible, prisoners must have a permanent home address.



Simon Hart leaving prison yesterday, on his way to celebrate freedom with a lager

## Inquiry on Branson's Chinese trespass

By Helen Rumbelow

RICHARD BRANSON'S illegal balloon crossing of China is being investigated by the Civil Aviation Authority after a complaint by Beijing.

The British Embassy in Beijing received a formal complaint from the Chinese Government on January 14, which we have passed on to the CAA," the Foreign Office said. The authority, which has the power to revoke licences, said it was looking into the ICO Global Challenger's trespass.

Will Whitehorn, spokesman for Mr Branson, said that Virgin was confident it would be exonerated by the CAA. "The letter merely says that the Chinese are upset that we didn't land, but the crew wouldn't have survived a landing in the Himalayas," he said.

"The Chinese were very helpful. But due to circumstances with the winds, we missed their co-ordinates of entry."

China's decision to deny entry into its airspace has left three other balloon projects — including the all-British Cable and Wireless team — in a predicament. They have only two weeks before the jet streams that could catapult them around the world break up.

## Drivers tell of rising road rage

By Stewart Tindler

MORE than half of London car-users have encountered "road rage" in the past year, according to a survey by Scotland Yard published yesterday.

The poll of more than 4,000 drivers and passengers found that 53 per cent reported incidents of aggression, including 41 per cent who said they had been insulted or gestured at. Eight per cent had been forced to pull over or been driven off the road. Four per cent said that a driver had got out of his vehicle and threatened them.

People aged between 35 and 54 suffered the most incidents: 69 per cent of men and 62 per cent of women reported cases. Those over 55 were the least likely to encounter road rage.

It was the first time that the Yard had included questions on road rage in its annual survey of public attitudes and concerns. Sir Paul Condon, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, suggested that many of the incidents could be attributed to frustration at traffic congestion in the capital. He said that police supported the creation of a London-wide authority and an elected mayor partly because this would bring co-ordination to traffic planning.



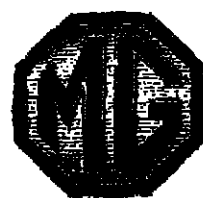
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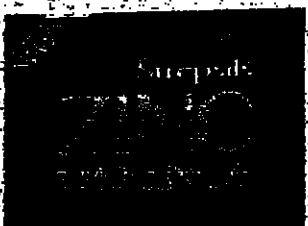
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# Why Banks is wary of envoys bearing gifts

By JAMES LANDALE  
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

WHEN Tony Banks became Sports Minister, he was unprepared for the torrent of cheap gifts handed over by visiting ministers and officials. Mounds of scarves, ties, mugs and other sporting memorabilia adorn the shelves of his office at the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

Interviewed by Radio 4 about the "gifts for favours" scandal enveloping the International Olympic Committee, Mr Banks bemoaned the culture of present-giving that permeates politics and sport. His office off Trafalgar Square, he told the *Today* programme, was full of bric-a-brac and "anyone is welcome to come along and have a look at it". The *Times* took up the invitation and examined the booty that gives rise to his title of the Government's King of Tack.

Mr Banks's 18 months of ministerial experience has left him with more than 50 gifts. Under Whitehall rules, ministers can keep gifts worth less than £140. If they want to keep anything worth more, they must pay the difference. If the minister does not want a gift,



Banks finds swapping presents "embarrassing"

it is kept in store and sold several years later.

When Mr Banks's officials were asked if any of his gifts exceeded £140, they smirked and said: "See for yourself." Although the minister would never say it, the quality is, well, mixed. "All this is very unlikely to find its way to my home," he admitted. "Everything I have got is there in my room."

He finds the custom an awkward one. "I am vaguely embarrassed by these presents. There is an enormous exchange of tokens that people feel obliged to do, and no one knows how to stop it."

"If you do not reciprocate, you feel that you will be consid-

ered discourteous." He returns the favours with House of Commons gifts — cufflinks, make-up compacts and, whiskey glasses — and the National Portrait Gallery's book of Sporting Heroes. "It is a process completely like sending Christmas cards: you wish it had never started in the first place."

Rarely do ministers receive gifts worth more than £140 and often they prove problematic. Sir George Young, known as the bicycling baronet, was given more bikes than he knew what to do with while Minister of Transport in the last Government.

When John Major was Prime Minister, he was given a horse by President Niyazov of Turkmenistan for his 50th birthday in 1993. The three-year-old colt remained in Turkmenistan for many months as officials struggled to organise its journey to Britain. The delay angered the President and much diplomatic embarrassment ensued.

After a long and tortuous journey via Moscow, the stallion reached Britain in 1994. It proved too small and unruly for duels with the Household Cavalry and is being looked after by a breeder.



"The quality is, well, mixed": James Landale with "the King of Tack's" memorabilia

## From black belt to wooden brick

NOT surprisingly, football predominates in Mr Banks's collection (James Landale writes). As a fanatical Chelsea supporter, he has a team shirt hung on the wall. Near by is a painting commemorating Chelsea's 1997 FA Cup "success", signed by the team.

He has football pennants from Uruguay, Costa Rica and Malta, and scarves representing teams from Argentina to Northampton. A match ball from the France '98 World Cup sits on his shelves.

One of his tackiest ties is a bright yellow garment supporting Manchester's bid to hold the 2002 Commonwealth Games. A cheap tin model of an old-fashioned sailing barque from Malta's Manchester United supporters' club is also displayed.

The only gift Mr Banks has received from the Olympic authorities is a small brass figurine of a male torso, rippling with stomach muscles.

His greatest haul came from last year's visit to the 13th Asian Games in Bangkok. He was given a model sailing dinghy with a blue

plastic sail bearing an elephant, the official mascot, and a truly horrible blue tie. He also received a delightful gold-plated ceremonial key from the Governor of Bangkok, Bhichit Ramakul.

A wooden figure of a horse, given by a FIFA executive in Mali, is probably the most attractive item. Known as a *chiviri*, the horse promises good health and spirits.

One gift is simply a wooden brick, from the Argentine Junior Athletic Association in 1997, bearing the motto: *Mens sana in corpore sano*. He has a wooden and brass shield from Qatar, a papier mâché owl from Japan, a tableau of a house under a tree in Costa Rica, and a gold-plate and glass plaque marking the tenth anniversary of the Saudi-British memorandum of understanding for youth and sport.

Perhaps the most surprising object is a threatening-looking black belt. A certificate declares that Mr Banks is an honorary Third Dan black belt in taekwondo. The minister has, of course, never done a high kick in his life.

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## COLOMBIA

Earthquake Emergency Appeal

Over 1,000 people are now reported dead with over 1,500 injured following the worst earthquake to hit Colombia in 60 years. Authorities say the figure will rise because emergency services, already stretched, have not yet been able to reach people buried alive in rural areas.

Emergency teams have been joined by local survivors to shift tons of rubble with their bare hands. Whilst the major issue now is search and rescue there will, in the coming weeks, be a desperate need for emergency relief.

Seventeen towns in the Armenia area of Colombia have been badly hit, two having been literally wiped off the map. Hospitals are overrun. The region's transport routes are in chaos, which will have a major impact on the area's main industry, coffee production.

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# Shortages put transplant surgery at risk

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE future of organ transplants is threatened by a growing shortage of donors and specialists capable of doing the life-saving operations, the Royal College of Surgeons of England says in a report today.

Transplantation is now the preferred treatment for most cases of major organ failure and waiting lists are growing at the time, but the number of organs available is diminishing, while surgeons in training are showing less interest in making a career in this highly skilled field.

Sir Peter Morris, Nuffield Professor of Surgery at Oxford University, who chaired the working party that drew up the report, said: "It is not an exaggeration to say that the provision of organ transplantation as a service is on a knife-edge — the two major problems being an inadequate supply of organs to meet the demand and an acute shortage of transplant surgeons."

The most recent figures show that there were 4,526 patients waiting for kidneys, 172 for livers, 196 for hearts, 99 for heart and lung, and 187 for lungs.

The shortage among organ donors is partly due to the reduction in road accident

deaths over the past two decades. They have fallen by 2,000 a year to about 3,700. In addition, the number dying of brain haemorrhage has fallen by 3,000 a year over the same period. People who die in this way are the largest source of donated organs.

The shortage among surgeons is largely due to their anti-social working hours and the fact that the operations, although highly complex, have become so routine that they give poor job satisfaction and little kudos.

Most donors are accident victims or patients who die in intensive care units and by the time their organs can be removed and the recipient made ready for the operation it is usually very late in the day. More than 98 per cent of heart transplant operations take place after midnight.

"The high level of nocturnal activity makes it difficult for surgeons to maintain the same workload as they grow older," the report says. "Moreover, now that surgical techniques are well refined, the time has passed when reputations could be built on the service aspects of transplant surgery."

Because of the shortage of donors an increasing number

of organs are now being taken from older people. Those have less chance of working successfully, which also discourages young surgeons. "Trainees tend to view transplantations at best as a part but not a central part of their career commitment."

Kidney transplant surgeons have least job satisfaction. Their work is so specialised that they often cannot do other operations. There are 67 consultants doing kidney transplants but students are dropping out of courses. A recent study showed that 40 per cent of students studying kidney transplantation decided not to make it a career. The specialty is so understaffed that those doing it usually have to work one night in two.

Liver transplant surgeons do a range of other types of related surgery and have greater job satisfaction. There are, however, only 22 of them.

The report calls for the creation of a national transplant service to oversee the way in which organs are collected and sent to recipients. It wants to see one specialist kidney unit set up to cover each two million of the population, and a special advisory group created for each organ.



Beth Wagstaff, who died peacefully at home surrounded by her family after a long battle against breast cancer. Her funeral takes place today

## Founder of breast cancer trust dies

BETH WAGSTAFF, who founded a breast cancer charity in memory of a friend, has died from the illness at the age of 59. She was discharged from hospital last Friday and died at home yesterday at her home in Hertford. Her family were at her bedside.

Jon Lansman, 41, her husband, said: "She died peacefully and was calm right up until the end. I was with her all night and her parents and brothers were there shortly before she died. The children woke up and came in just moments afterwards. It could not have happened in a nicer way." Ms Wagstaff, who had three chil-

### Claudia Joseph reports on the end of a charity champion's battle against illness

dren — Max, 11, Molly, 8, and Benjamin, 7 — was diagnosed with breast cancer in December 1994, almost three years after she first attended Guy's Hospital in London with a lump in her breast. Her husband is pursuing her medical negligence claim against Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust for allegedly failing to diagnose the disease. Ms Wagstaff, who was assistant

chief executive of Hertfordshire County Council, founded The Lavender Trust in memory of Ruth Picardie, who chronicled her own illness in a series of newspaper articles. Her funeral takes place today in the village of Brickendon and her husband has requested that, rather than send flowers, mourners send donations to The Lavender Trust. Bill Ogley, chief executive of Hert-

fordshire County Council, said: "This is a tragedy for Beth's family and our thoughts are with them. It is also a great loss for the council. Beth was an enormous asset with her skill and enthusiasm. She will be greatly missed."

Rosemary Birch, a nurse who helped care for Ms Wagstaff at St Thomas' Hospital, said: "We were all very sad to hear of Beth's death. She was an extremely courageous lady." Donations can be made to Breast Cancer Care on 0171-384 2884 or by sending a cheque to The Lavender Trust, Breast Cancer Care, Freeport LON644, London, SW6 4BR.

## 'Crisis ahead' over retiring Asian GPs Brain disease drug hope

By NICK NUTTALL

CERTAIN areas of Britain could lose a quarter of their GPs because so many Asian doctors are about to retire, a study has found. Of the 25,333 doctors in general practice, 4,192 — 16.5 per cent — qualified in South Asia before coming here. About two thirds of these will retire within the next ten years.

Areas that have few Asian doctors, including parts of the West Country, are unlikely to suffer. But other places, where half the GPs qualified in Asia, are facing severe problems. "In some health authorities there will be a loss of one, in four, general practitioners."

Those health authorities with the greatest number of such doctors are in some of the most deprived areas and have experienced the most difficulty in filling vacancies," says the study published in the *British Medical Journal*.

The authors, Donald Taylor, of Duke University in North Carolina, and Aneez Esmael, of the University of Manchester, are calling on planners to act urgently to counter the threat to health care. One area of concern is the falling number of students wanting to study medicine, and the relatively high number dropping out of their degrees or leaving the profession when young. "Another issue is the expected retire-

ment of doctors who qualified in South Asian medical schools and emigrated in the 1960s and 1970s primarily to fill a perceived staff shortage in an expanding NHS," say the team.

The researchers used data collected in 1992 which logged the country of qualification for British GPs. They tracked the movements of the doctors to assess the impact of their retirement on different health authorities.

The hardest-hit authority was likely to be Barking and Havering in East London and Essex. More than 56 per cent of its GPs qualified from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India or Pakistan. By 2007, half of these will have retired. Next hardest-

hit will be Redbridge and Waltham Forest, where 44 per cent of the GPs are of Asian background; half of these are likely to retire in the next eight years. Other hard-hit authorities include Walsall, Salford, City and East London, Brent and Harrow, and Wigan.

Muhammad Chaudry, 62, who qualified as a GP in 1966 and has practised in Chatham, Kent, ever since, said that with so many doctors nearing retirement age, there would be severe problems. These days, young men were less likely to come over to work as doctors because they had to pass an examination in the English language before being able to register, he said.

By HELEN RUMBLELOW

A NEW drug treatment for brain cancer was made available on the National Health Service yesterday.

The treatment is the most promising advance in two decades for the most common and most lethal form of brain cancer affecting 3,000 people in Britain every year.

Previously those with "glioma" tumours had a 10 per cent chance of survival, and chemotherapy was barely effective with some terrible side effects.

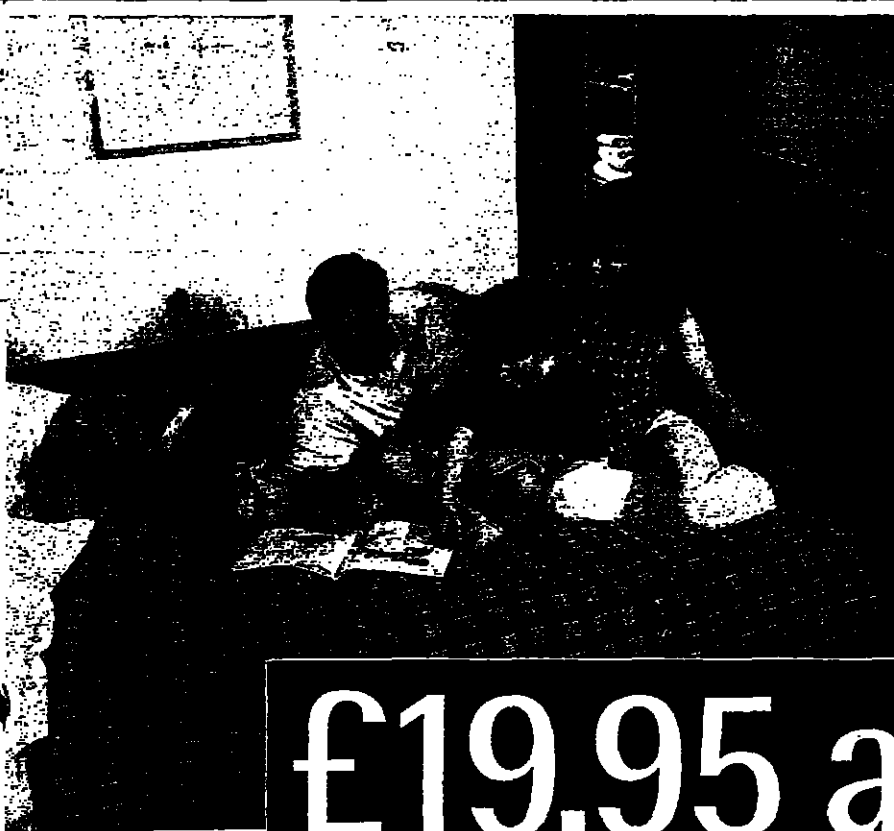
Trials were carried out on people with advanced brain cancer, which can cause personality changes, speech loss, blindness and paralysis. In a third, their tumours were shrunk by the drug, and in half the drug stopped their tumours growing.

"It transforms their quality of life, which is amazing in a field where there has been really very little hope," said Ed Newlands, Professor of Cancer Medicine at Charing Cross Hospital, at the launch of the drug at the Cancer Research

Campaign in London. However, it will cost about £1,200 a month for a course of treatment, said Schering-Plough, which has bought the licence from the Cancer Research Campaign.

Tests have begun to see if the drug has more powerful effects if used for early stages of the disease, and if it can offer hope to those with skin cancer. The drug has been in development for 20 years by Malcolm Stevens, working for the Cancer Research Campaign at Nottingham University.

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مکان الکترونیک



Ffion Jenkins at the Royal Festival Hall, London, for yesterday's conference on business money for the arts. William Hague's wife, who works for the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts, heard Colin

## Firm backing for arts

Tweedy, her chief executive, announce that sponsorship rose 20 per cent last year to a record £115 million. Peter

Ainsworth, Shadow Culture Minister, said: "The most curious thing about the arts in this country is the need

constantly to justify their existence, as though they were an embarrassment. This is all the more odd as we are rather better at the arts than some other countries that share none of our inhibitions."

# Covent Garden cuts opera and ballet prices

BY DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

THE Royal Opera House is to slash ticket prices, stay open during the day and take opera and ballet into the community.

Stung by the controversy over the £78 million of National Lottery money going towards its £214 million new building, it has finally acted to counter accusations of arrogance and mismanagement. The building, due to open in November, will offer free chamber music concerts, tours and exhibitions as well as opera and ballet for considerably less than before.

Top prices for full-length operas, such as the opening production of Verdi's *Falstaff*, will be about £100 less than in the old building, bringing them down to £150. The best tickets for ballet have been cut from £70 to £60. More than half the seats will cost £40 or less for all but the most expensive oper-

as and £30 or less for ballet. Although Covent Garden always had tickets for only a few pounds, the new prices will greatly extend the range of those between £6 and £45.

The opera house also guarantees that 20 per cent of the tickets in any range will be available to the general public in the past the most glittering productions were sold to the "great and good" and corporate members long before others could request them.

Michael Kaiser, Covent Garden's recently appointed chief executive, emphasised that the organisation was on budget and on schedule. The company had prepared a two-year budget that showed it could break even, he said, partly by reducing the administrative staff of 850 to 520, with a further 150 casual members.

Previously, Mr Kaiser said,

the company was spending "too much on admin and too little on art. We have to remember what our mission is: ultimately, it's about performance, not administration."

The theatre has lurched from one financial crisis to another amid scathing criticisms of mismanagement in reports by the theatre director Sir Richard Eyre and the Culture Select Committee. While accusations of arrogance and elitism stained its image, it also had to contend with the threat of closure when staff refused to accept working conditions.

However, the new board, under Sir Colin Southgate, persuaded the Arts Council to increase its subsidy from £14.4 million last year to £16 million from next April in return for pledges on public access, lower ticket prices and tight management controls.

Expressing a determination to create "one of the great theatres of the world", Mr Kaiser said: "People will be able to take tours, attend free concerts, sit in the restaurants and bars." It will be open six days a week during the daytime, between 11am and 3pm.

"We have made great strides with the pricing structure," he said. The lowest prices would be available when people most wanted to come — Fridays and Saturdays — when the top price would go down to £35 for opera, against the previous £47.50, and £30 for ballet against the previous £70.

Central to Covent Garden's plans is the studio theatre for educational work and "hundreds" of events. The programme includes instructing teachers from state schools on the art of teaching opera and ballet, and working with children to create their own opera.

Programmes will go beyond Covent Garden to hospitals and hospices.

## Stage is set for a grand revival

BY RODNEY MITNES  
OPERA CRITIC

THE programme for the ROH's reopening is good news for those who feared that box-office demands were going to mean wall-to-wall Tosca. True, there is a revival of the much-loved *Bohème* early in the new year. Hafink conducting the award-winning *Meistersinger* with John Tomlinson, and a starry *Rosencavalier* revival — the sort of international fare the ROH is there for.

Angela Gheorgiu and Roberto Alagna, the hottest properties in the business, will sing Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*. Opening the season with that other hot property, Bryn Terfel, in a new production of *Falstaff* — with the well-tested team of Hafink and the director Graham Vick — is the sort of coup that the re-launch needs; and prove it's not a one-off. Terfel returns to sing in *The Flying Dutchman*.

There are also a revival of Britten's *Gavain*, and Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre*, in the Peter Sellars production from Salzburg.

The "other" *Otello* — Rossini's — will be performed for the first time at the ROH, and Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*, conducted by Nicholas McGegan, is another Salzburg import. But we will have to wait until next spring for what may well turn out to be an important premiere: Martin's *Greek Passion*, based on Kazantzakis's *Christ Recrucified*.

So, a really well-balanced programme. Add the activities, many free, in the two new studio spaces, the hugely PC education programmes and enough "star tenor" content to loosen corporate purse-strings, and you have to admit the ROH is back in business.

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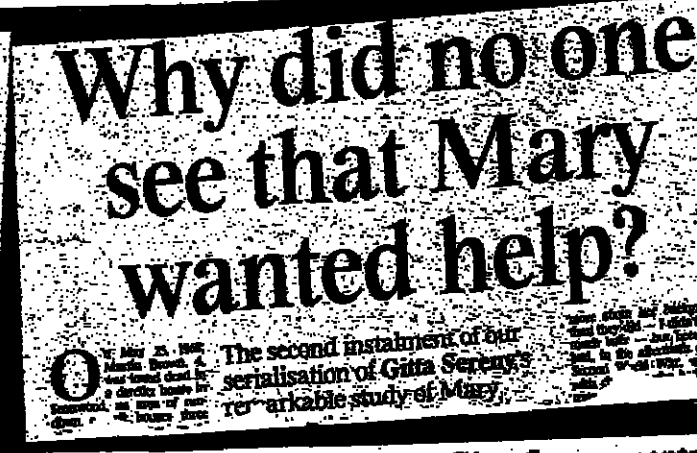
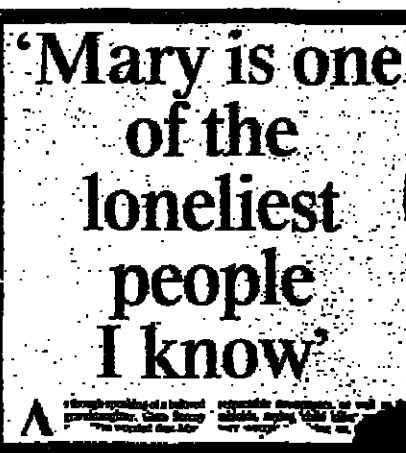
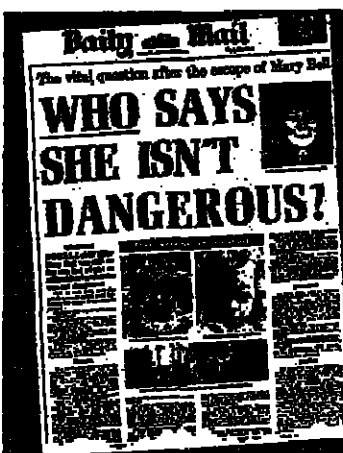
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Mary Bell, the child killer, left: a tabloid reaction to her escape from jail in 1977; and how *The Times* last year serialised *Cries Unheard*, the biography by the author Gitta Sereny, centre

Last Spring *The Times* serialised *Cries Unheard*, Gitta Sereny's disturbing biography of the child killer Mary Bell. In the ensuing controversy, *The Times* was accused of breaching press watchdog rules banning payments to convicted criminals. The Press Complaints Commission rejected the complaint, saying the book was in the public interest. But concerns were raised about later allegations of media harassment against Bell and her daughter, who learned of her mother's identity for the first time. On Wednesday peers debated the lessons to be learnt from the case. Lord Wakeham, chairman of the PCC, insisted that *The Times* had been right to publish.

Reports: James Landale

## Street of shame or real life?

**'The time has come to think of big fines'**

— Lord McNally

THE debate was opened by Lord McNally, the Liberal Democrat peer who initiated it. He quoted from two journalists. "Brian MacArthur, writing in *The Times* on May 1, had this to say about the press treatment of Mary Bell and her family in the spring of 1998: 'It was the fault of the tabloid editors who have mercilessly hounded her. It need not have happened and there were many journalists around me who were ashamed of their trade.' Harsh words indeed."

"But Mr Roy Greenslade, writing in *The Guardian* on July 23, 1998 following the PCC adjudication, wrote: 'In siding with the editors who have published — and paid handsomely for it — the stories of convicted criminals, the PCC shows it lives in the real world.'"

Lord McNally said: "Two journalists, both of whom I respect, and two different views: street of shame or the real world. It is because there are conflicting opinions and un-

answered questions that I ask this question tonight. He asked the Government to say whether the responsible for Mary Bell's supervision had informed ministers that she was writing a book. "If ministers were not involved and misjudgments occurred at lower levels, have lessons been learnt? Secondly, can the minister tell us why the injunction which carries the name of a Mary Bell Order was so late in applying to the very persons it was initially designed to protect?"

Lord McNally quoted from a letter he had received from Lord Irvine of Lairg. The Lord Chancellor said he would consider it "repugnant" for a football hooligan to profit from a book about his crime, but he would not ban it: "I could not bring myself to prohibit a book of this kind which could add to the sum total of human knowledge about the genesis of crime."

Lord McNally said that the Lord Chancellor and the PCC were missing the point. "What happens when that kind of public interest — that is, a genuine extension of understanding of an issue — is transformed by the press into a sensationalist and to sell newspapers? The commission view that it was publication, not serialisation, which provoked the search for Mary Bell is doubtful."

Lord McNally voiced concern at the rule preventing the PCC holding an inquiry without an initial complaint being made. "I believe the commission should change its rules. To allow a situation to arise where newspaper reporters are camped outside the house of a 14-year-old girl supposedly under the protection of the courts, in flagrant abuse of the PCC code, is tantamount to a fireman watching a house burn down but doing nothing because no one inside has dialled 999."

**'The press must put its house in order'**

— Lord Lester

Lord Lester of Herne Hill, a Liberal Democrat, noted that from 2000 the Human Rights Act would come into force, forcing the courts to balance free speech and privacy. "It is important that the PCC is given the power to provide effective remedies so that the courts are only involved in the last resort and not as a matter of course. The media clause which the Government wrote into the Human Rights Act is a great incentive for the press to give powers to the PCC since the privacy code will be taken into account by judges when they decide upon what remedies to grant."

Viscountess Assheton, for the Tory front bench, said she had found *The Times* public interest arguments in the case compelling. But she suggested that the PCC might consider whether or not it should be able to investigate on its own volition without waiting for a complaint from an injured party. "If the commission does not want to consider the whole range of third-party complaints, it may wish to consider whether a particular case is relevant to another case which it is currently considering. The commission may wish to consider whether in its opinion there is an overwhelming public interest issue at stake."

Leading article, page 25

## Wakeham says Times abided by press code

LORD WAKEHAM, chairman of the Press Complaints Commission, reiterated his view that *The Times* had acted in accordance with the code when it serialised the Mary Bell biography.

"It was not a moral judgment about whether the book should have been written. It was not a judgment about Mary Bell's decision to accept money. It was not a judgment about whether it is right or wrong to pay criminals. It was a judgment made only on the basis of a code which says that newspapers can pay criminals — either directly or indirectly — provided that there is a public interest in doing so and payment is necessary for that to be done."

He added: "The commission found the public interest case put forward by *The Times* in this case to be overwhelming. It was, in a nutshell, this: does the criminal justice system actually deliver justice to children as damaged as Mary Bell was and, if not, how can it be improved?"

"I have to say that the public interest oozes from every pore of the book and in turn from the extracts from it which were serialised in the newspaper. They included circumstances of how a child who grew up in surroundings of deprivation came to be a murderer; the connection between Bell's own crime and the abuse to which she was herself subjected; and the first authoritative account of how the



Wakeham said public interest case was overwhelming

penal system deals with child criminals. All those matters were of genuine public interest. That is why we believed *The Times* was right to serialise the book and did not breach the code in doing so. What the author had to say was important and deserved a wide audience."

But he added: "What disturbed me far more is what followed: namely the alleged harassment of Mary Bell and her daughter and the apparent fact that Mary Bell was forced to reveal her identity to her daughter for the first time. The commission had massive sympathy for Mary Bell's daughter — as indeed did *The Times* — but was constrained in what action it could take."

First, an injunction covering identification of Mary Bell existed, but was not being enforced. Second, no one made a complaint, preventing the PCC holding an inquiry. "I would have welcomed a complaint about the alleged harassment which took place. It would have given us an opportunity to make clear that the harassment of any child is unacceptable and that we shall always condemn it."

He added that the "furore about the payment to criminals and the alleged harassment that took place would have occurred whether or not there was serialisation of the book in *The Times* or any other newspaper."

Lord Wakeham ended by offering to co-operate fully with the Government's review of the law.

## Review of law by summer

LORD WILLIAMS of Mostyn, the Home Office Minister, said a review of the law on allegations of media harassment and intrusion would be completed by summer.

But he said the difficulties of changing the law were significant. "If we can encourage the PCC at least to review its present powers, to see whether or not they are working effectively, in the end that may be the best way forward." He suggested that the PCC should be able to investigate on its own volition.

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# Scotland Yard plans specialist restraint teams

By Stewart Tindler, Crime Correspondent

SCOTLAND YARD is planning to set up specialist restraint teams to deal with mentally ill people or violent drug users after a series of deaths in custody.

Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, has ordered senior officers to draw up a blueprint for the teams after the death last week of Roger Sylvester. The 30-year-old black man from North London, who suffered from mental illness, died after being held by police during a disturbance.

This week a jury decided that restraint tactics contributed to the death of Nathan Delamunty, a businessman from South London who became distressed after taking cocaine. The inquest was told he had 52 injuries.

Sir Paul is also considering issuing video cameras to the teams and to police dealing with disturbed people so that the film can be shown to inquests. Video cameras are already used in stations, on operations and are carried in some police vans.

The emergency teams would operate like armed response vehicles. They would

be on 24-hour call around London and could carry paramedics, doctors or officers with special training.

Each would have a qualified high-speed driver. Officers called to a scene could summon their aid or 999 dispatchers would alert them after an emergency call from a member of the public.

The team would be qualified to assess a patient, and civilian counsellors could mollify a disturbed man or woman. If they could not be calmed the teams would restrain them safely using the techniques deployed by nurses in mental hospitals. They would be able to sedate a patient and arrange for transfer to hospital by ambulance.

The teams would be the first of their kind in the world, but Sir Paul now feels they would be justified to relieve the pressure on officers and answer public concern.

Sir Paul said yesterday that he had decided there must be new measures following the case of Mr Sylvester, who died in an intensive care unit after being taken by police to a mental health hospital.

Police first-aid training has already been improved and

some methods of restraint have been banned.

Sir Paul said police were dealing with hundreds of cases each year of violent situations created by drug abuse or by mental health patients who had been discharged to care in the community programmes. The main problem came from cocaine users because there was always a risk they could suffer a heart attack after a rush of adrenaline.

At present ambulance staff will not deal with violent patients and it is left to police to step in, often with only a pair of handcuffs and restraint techniques.

The commissioner said: "It is becoming harder and harder for officers to know how to deal with these cases. In a civilised society there must be a better way of dealing with these cases. Is it fair to expect police officers to solve these issues?"

Scotland Yard has started talks with ambulance services, coroners and doctors to assess the plan and work out how it could operate. Sir Paul acknowledged that setting up the units would be expensive but drastic action was needed.



Maria Dingwall and actors Christopher Eccleston and Tom Courtney at the service

# Cathedral full in memory of Derek Bentley

By Robin Young

SOUTHWARK Cathedral beside London Bridge was full yesterday afternoon for a long-postponed service in memory of a simple-minded young man hanged 46 years ago for murdering a policeman.

Derek Bentley's conviction for the murder of PC Sidney Miles was quashed by the Court of Appeal last July. Yesterday's service was an exercise in penitence and contrition, though government ministers who had promised to attend failed to appear.

Despite their absence the cathedral was full, and many more people who had involved themselves in the case over the years sent messages or cards of support.

The Provost of Southwark, the Very Rev Colin Slee, delivered a searing sermon against complacency and institutional immorality. "Capital punishment is not only evil because miscarriages of justice cannot be reversed but also because it pollutes and ultimately destroys the very fabric of morality in society," the provost said.

Derek Bentley's death, he said, had altered the lives of many people and transformed Bentley's working-



Bentley: hanged 46 years ago for murder

class family "into doggedly determined campaigners, articulate, informed and politically active". The provost added: "It is a matter of profound regret that there is no senior ministerial representative here."

Derek Bentley's niece, Maria Bentley Dingwall, deputy mayor of the London Borough of Merton, read from St John's Gospel.

Christopher Eccleston, who played Derek Bentley in the film *Let Him Have It*, attended. Derek Bentley's brother Dennis, 56, said: "I can imagine my mother and father and my sister, Iris, being very proud if they could have been here."

# Rescued chimp gets new start

By Helen Johnstone

ONE of the most unusual custody battles in Britain began yesterday with a subtle but defiant change in name.

Directors of the monkey sanctuary that rescued Trudy the chimpanzee from the cruelty of circus trainer Mary Chipperfield announced that its name would now be split with a "y" rather than "i" as the Chipperfield had.

Chipperfield, who was found guilty on Wednesday of cruelty towards the chimpanzee, is justifying her having her back. Andover Magistrates Court was told last because Trudy was owned by Chipperfield, promotional and not Chipperfield herself, it could not stop the company returning the chimp to her Hampshire farm.

The chimp spent much of the first 18 months of its life in a cage, less than 4y3 metres, in a freezing barn, was isolated from other animals and had only a swing rope and a ball for entertainment. Her

sleeping quarters, in which she was locked from 4.30pm until 7.30am, was a darkened box similar to that used to transport cats. Her meals included scraps from supermarket rubbish bins.

Trudy's new world consists of a two-acre run and a large centrally heated house complete with gymnasium. It shares the area with a group of 11 wise members have all been rescued from abuse. Meals served at regular intervals include milk, primate pellets in a choice of raspberry and malt flavour, sunflowers, fruit, eggs and vegetables.

Jim Cronin, who took her to Monkey World, Wareham, Dorset, last April after police confiscated her from Chipperfield, said the chimpanzee, which has two finger tips and a toe missing, was traumatised. "We have rescued 44 chimps. She looked very much like them. We immediately showed an interest in her life and she responded."

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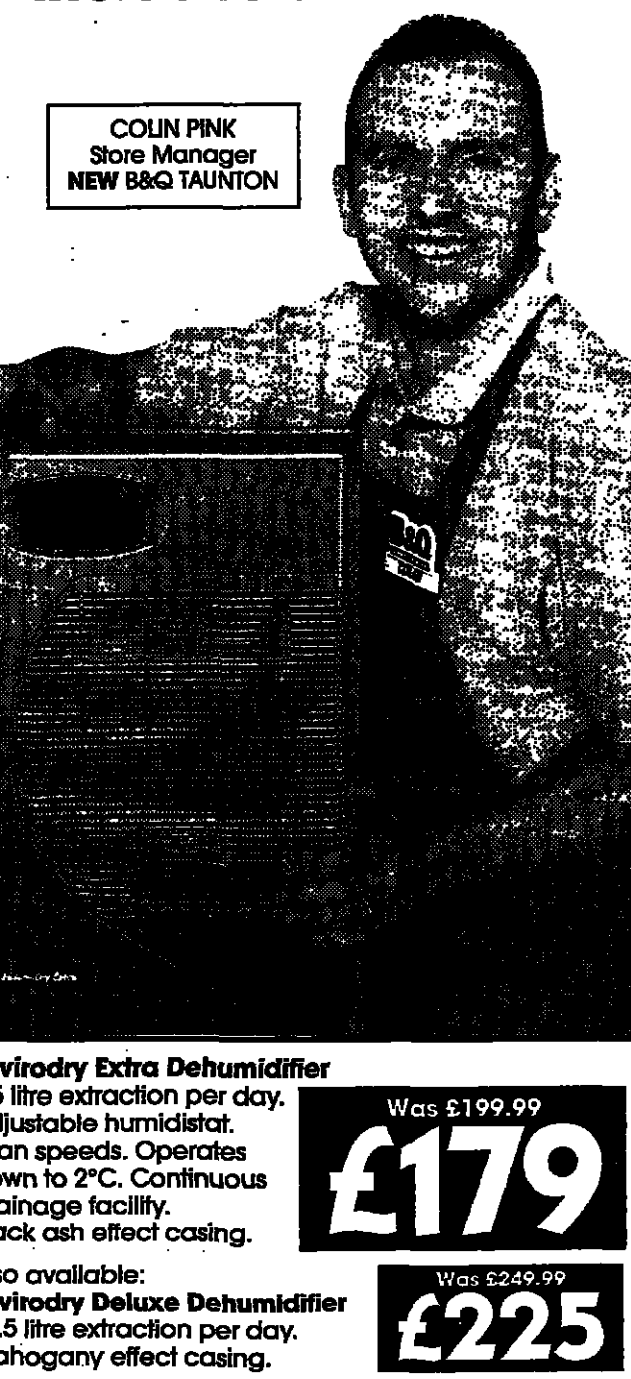
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# Murder riddle darkens Yale's hallowed halls

THE brutality of the murder alone might have made a few headlines. The young woman was found face down with 17 stab wounds in her back and neck. But there had been 11 other murders in New Haven, Connecticut over the previous year so it was hardly likely to register on the national radar. The disclosure that she was a Yale University student made it more interesting, of course.

No student at the prestigious university had been killed for eight years. Then police said that this time they were not looking for a low-life robber or local drifter. They suspected that the killer was somebody from the tight-knit Ivy League academic community itself.

Almost two months after Suzanne Jovin, a bright and popular 21-year-old politics major, was found dead, nobody has been arrested or charged. That does not mean, however, that accusatory fingers are not being pointed. One of the world's most famous universities is consumed by the mystery, the gothic halls sullied by an atmosphere of suspicion.

Jovin spent much of December 4, the day she died, throwing a party for mentally ill people in the town. After the party, at about 9pm, she returned a borrowed van to the university and was last seen by college porters on campus.

Three quarters of an hour

**Mystery deepens over student's brutal death, writes Damian Whitworth**

later she was killed, on a patch of moonlit grass in an up-market residential area that immediately struck investigators as strangely out of the way.

James Van de Velde, 38, who was supervising Jovin's thesis on international terrorism, entered the picture when police began talking to people who had seen her on the day she died. He said that he had seen



Professor Van de Velde named as a suspect

her before the party, but it was for less than a minute, when she dropped off a draft for his perusal.

Professor Van de Velde's students reported that he was visibly upset in the days after Jovin's death. With tears in his eyes he had placed a bouquet on her chair in class and asked for a moment's silence. "The professor seemed as shaken as everyone else," said one. He also wrote a tribute to Jovin in the *Yale Daily News*. Then rumours about the popular professor, who lived half a mile from where Jovin died, began to circulate.

Police confirmed that he was a suspect and began interviewing students, former students and other acquaintances. Professor Van de Velde responded by saying that the situation was a "nightmare", that he was innocent and the way the investigation was being conducted was unfair.

The public announcement that I am in a pool of suspects is immensely upsetting. Any suggestion that I had anything to do with the death of my former student is deeply, deeply painful and outrageous," the professor said.

His offers to supply a blood sample and take a lie-detector test were turned down. Nevertheless, the university cancelled his classes, insisting that it presumed he was innocent but that his presence in the classroom would be "a



Suzanne Jovin, the 21-year-old student at Yale who was killed in a knife attack

major distraction for students and impair their educational experience".

A Yale graduate himself, Professor Van de Velde had worked as a diplomat in the State Department under the Bush Administration before returning to his alma mater to teach. He was renowned for his unusual methods, such as pulling a gun out of his briefcase in class to demonstrate to

his diplomacy students how to deal with an extortion attempt. He would later say that the gun was not real.

His apartment contained books marked "CIA" and there was speculation as to whether he had worked for the agency, or wanted to create that impression. Professor Van de Velde was studying for a journalism degree and had been gaining work experience

at a local television station. While there two female television reporters filed complaints about his behaviour. One accused him of peering through her windows and constantly phoning her after she broke off a fledgling relationship.

The university authorities have decided that Professor Van de Velde will continue to be paid as police struggle to find the killer in their midst.

## WORLD IN BRIEF

### Nigeria threatens to quit Freetown

Freetown: Sierra Leone's embattled democratic Government may soon be forced to negotiate with the leaders of a bloody rebellion after Nigeria's leader said this week that he wanted to pull his troops out of the country to ensure a smooth transition to a civilian government due to be elected in May (Sam Kiley writes). General Abdulsalam Abubakar said in Abuja that he wanted to withdraw his troops before May 9.

A sudden pullout by the Nigerians, who dominate the Ecomog forces backing the elected Government, would be disastrous for its leader Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. He has only a handful of loyal soldiers, the rest having repeatedly changed sides.

### Harare torture proven

Harare: According to a report issued here there is undeniable medical evidence that the two Zimbabwean journalists detained illegally last week by military authorities were tortured (Jan Raath writes). Phillimon Chigwanda, an orthopaedic surgeon and trauma specialist, said: "There is no doubt in my mind" that Mark Chavunduka, 34, editor of the independent *Standard* newspaper, and Ray Choto, 36, a reporter, were "subjected to severe interrogation and torture".

### Call for Rock detente

Spain's main opposition party has called on Madrid to set aside the issue of sovereignty in the search for an accommodation with Gibraltar (Michael Binyon writes). The Socialist Party has called for talks to boost co-operation and mutual understanding, and suggested a given period when there should be no change in the status quo — a break with tradition sure to receive warm encouragement in Britain.

### 11 hurt in Cape blast

Cape Town: Eleven people were injured, three seriously, when a bomb exploded outside a police station in the heart of the city. Leonard Khiphe, of the serious violent crimes unit, said two suspects were being interrogated. Michael Joward, the visiting Shadow Foreign Secretary, went to the scene and said: "These offences need to be tackled with determination and I hope the perpetrators will be brought to justice." (AFP)

### Daredevil transplant

Tampa, Florida: The motorcycle daredevil Evel Knievel, right, was in a stable condition after undergoing a liver transplant. Knievel, 60, has hepatitis C, which he believes he contracted from one of the many blood transfusions he needed after spectacular crashes in the 1960s and 1970s. The disease destroyed his liver. Knievel broke at least 35 bones and underwent surgery 14 times during his stunt career. (AP)



### Chips down for lovers

Kuala Lumpur: Muslim couples married in the Malaysian capital will be issued with cards with computer chips so Islamic police can instantly verify their vows, a news report said. Islamic police often raid rooms suspected of sheltering an unwed pair. Islamic law prohibits sex outside marriage and offenders face up to two months in jail and a fine. The Government hopes to give police portable card-readers. (AP)

## Teachers lose their grip in Japan's blackboard jungle

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

UNRULY pupils are driving Japan's teachers to seek psychiatric help after a collapse of discipline has left them unable to conduct classes in many schools. Clinics are having to treat increasing numbers suffering mental breakdowns and stress-related illnesses brought on by the phenomenon stoking a national debate *gakkyu hokai*, or disintegrating classrooms.

Forty-four per cent of junior and secondary teachers say that they

have witnessed the breakdown of discipline in classes, either their own or those of colleagues, according to a survey this month by Kyodo news agency. This time last year the Japanese media were awash with reports of classroom violence, which culminated in the fatal stabbing of a woman teacher by a 13-year-old.

In recent weeks, a country that once prided itself on rigorous classroom obedience has been shocked to discover that anarchy is spreading. Even junior schools, where children are traditionally most docile, are hotbeds of rebellion. Teachers testify

that it is common for lessons to be disrupted by pupils walking around, chatting and sharing snacks. Staff also tell of boys relieving themselves in corridors, spitting on classroom floors and smashing windows. Earlier this month two 15-year-old boys, streaming obscenities, lashed out at a group of male and female teachers, inflicting injuries that sent five staff to hospital, two with broken cheekbones.

The mayhem is taking its toll on a profession that long enjoyed respect in a country obsessed by education. At a national teachers' conference

last weekend participants described a sense of powerlessness. "The crisis in our schools and educational system is escalating at a rapid pace," Yuji Kawakami, head of the Japan Teachers' Union, said.

The Ministry of Education says teachers are increasingly affected by mental disorders: those whose absence stemmed from stress or nervous breakdowns account for a record 39 per cent of sick leave. The ministry blames pupils' disobedience. The toll on mental health is confirmed by doctors. Dr Ken Okada, head of psychiatry at Kanto Chuo Hospital in

Tokyo, has seen a sharp rise in teachers seeking treatment. "Many are males in their mid-thirties and females in their forties. Younger ones quit before they go mad."

This month a teacher, 34, committed suicide in the chemistry laboratory of a high school in Hokkaido, northern Japan. The man was said to be in despair over the collapse of discipline among his pupils.

Teaching experts, media pundits and parents groping for explanations are blaming a breakdown of family values, too much television and junk food.

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FROM TOM WALKER IN BELGRADE

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's mission in Kosovo, was curiously unruffled during the Serb propaganda furore that erupted following his condemnation of the Racak massacre. Hardliners within the Serbian Government demanded his immediate expulsion.



## Sainovic implicated in the Racak massacre

took journalists out for a meal on what was supposedly his last night in Pristina. It now appears that Mr. Walker had already heard the tapes showing that Mr. Samovic was in close contact with General Lukic, the police commander on the ground in Racak.

On the tapes General Lukic is initially told to "go in heavy" against Racak, a village well known as a frontline Kosovo Liberation Army position.

General Lukic and his fellow commanders in the province had been deeply angered by a series of KLA raids from Racak, the most recent of which had claimed the lives of three policemen. The sources said that Mr. Sainovic was kept up to date throughout the operation by General Lukic, and at one point was told that the death toll stood at 22.

Yesterday, Belgrade denied the existence of the tapes and an anonymous government official claimed it was "complete nonsense" to believe that Western intelligence could track

military command messages between the Belgrade Government and Kosovo.

"This is a big manipulation by the CIA, who are preparing to put in Nato troops and eventually to bomb," said the official. An aide to Mr Walker, however, said that Belgrade had badly underestimated

Western intelligence gathering in Kosovo. "Of course we can listen to conversations," he said, adding that he had "an ace up his sleeve".

Sources say the tapes record Mr Sainovic and General Lukic deciding to bar Louise Arbour, the international war crimes investigator, from en-

tering Yugoslavia, and include discussions over how best to make the massacre look like a pitched battle.

Mr Sainovic advised that the bodies be reclaimed from the village mosque, which, after an intense bombardment, they were, at the cost of the life of the local police commander.

Diplomats in Belgrade yesterday pointed out that while the tapes clearly implicate both men in the operation, they do not prove that they planned the massacre. "Telling people to go in hard is not surprising after what had happened to the police before hand," said one source.

News of the tapes came as Mr Milosevic's party rejected the six-nation Contact Group's plan for a Kosovo peace conference. "There never has been a peace conference with terrorists and why should Yugoslavia be the exception?" said Ivica Dacic, the Socialist Party spokesman.

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

**KOFI ANNAN**, the United Nations Secretary-General, yesterday supported Nato's threat of force in Kosovo, saying that Bosnia had underlined its necessity when all else failed.

Mr Annan was speaking during his first official visit to the Nato headquarters in Brussels on the eve of today's meeting in London of foreign ministers of the six Contact Group nations. This is expected to propose a peace conference at a neutral European venue within the next two weeks.

He told Nato ambassadors that the alliance must refine "the combination of force and diplomacy that is the key to peace in the Balkans". Recalling the "lessons of Bosnia", he said: "The bloody wars of the

last decade have left us with no illusions about the difficulty of halting internal conflict by reason or by force — particularly against the wishes of the Government of a sovereign state.” He added: “But nor have they left us with any illusions about the need to use force when all other means have failed.”

Mr Annan gave a warning that such a point might now have been reached in the former Yugoslavia. Javier Solana, Nato's Secretary-General, was due to give a solemn warning to Belgrade — probably later today — that Nato was prepared to launch airstrikes against military targets if the Government did not comply with its commitments to restrain its troops in Kosovo and begin immediate

peace talks. Igor Ivanov, Russia's Foreign Minister, flew to Paris yesterday to discuss the latest violence in the turbulent province with Hubert Védrine, his French counterpart. Both will be in London today, together with Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, and the British, German and Italian Foreign Ministers, to decide on further pressure to get peace talks going.

Moscow is implacably opposed to Nato airstrikes and is expected to throw its diplomatic weight behind a proposal for a peace conference. Belgrade has in the past rejected such a conference, while the ethnic Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army has shown no interest in any diplomatic solution that leaves Kosovo as

part of Yugoslavia. Mr Annan underlined the importance of learning the lessons of Bosnia "where horror threatens". The world had to be clear about the "credibility, legitimacy and morality of intervention and non-intervention". The only way to do that was to apply the lessons practically and emphatically.

In Kosovo horror was not just a threat but a reality. He wanted a political settlement. But in an apparent call to Nato not to lose its nerve, he said: "Let me ask only that we all — particularly those with the capacity to act — recall the lessons of Bosnia."

Nato is not expected to repeat its threat of intervention until after the Contact Group meeting so as not to embarrass the Russians.

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# US backs Jordan's heir apparent

Albright visit gives lie to US disappointment, Christopher Walker writes

THE American Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, yesterday paid a hastily arranged call on Jordan's novice Crown Prince in an attempt to put the weight of the United States behind him and to ensure there is no return to Jordan's old friendship with Iraq.

The symbolic 90-minute session, the first taste of international diplomacy for Prince Abdullah since being anointed on Monday, was confirmation by Washington that even in the unlikely event of King Hussein recovering from his latest cancer relapse, power has moved to a younger generation.

The talks came after further strong proof of tribal backing for the 36-year-old prince when hundreds of robed Beduin sheikhs converged on his hilltop palace to pledge allegiance. They coincided with pessimistic rumours about the King's health and the disclosure that a drastic deterioration in his condition on the plane from Jordan to the US had resulted in a false report spread in Israel and the Gulf that he was dead.

The conviction that the King, who has ruled for 47 years, is unlikely to return to his throne has unnerved Jordanians who have been kept in suspense by clumsy censor-



Beduin troops gather to salute Jordan's Crown Prince Abdullah, the heir apparent to the Hashemite kingdom, on his arrival at the royal palace in Amman yesterday

ship. Some Amman shopkeepers were weeping openly last night at the latest health bulletins.

The anxiety of Jordanians was exacerbated by false reports spread by the monarch himself that he had fully recovered and cartoons in the Am-

man press last week showing the ogle of cancer being knocked out by the 63-year-old King in the guise of a boxer, waving his gloves up high.

The importance of yesterday's visit, inserted into Mrs Albright's crowded itinerary at the insistence of President

Clinton, was underlined when Babel, the Baghdad paper owned by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son, praised the ailing monarch's switch in the succession away from his brother, Hassan. The appointment of Prince Abdullah was described as the wisest move

made by the King since Jordan sided with Saddam after his invasion of Kuwait.

The hand of Iraqi intelligence was seen in the new whispering campaign against Prince Hassan, roundly condemned by his brother for not criticising recent British and

American airstrikes on Iraq. He is reviled by the Baghdad regime for urging it to introduce democracy and respect human rights.

Mrs Albright said she wanted to "make it very clear where the United States stands with Jordan". She added without elaboration that she had discussed with the prince "the issues he is facing in Jordan", understood to mean economic difficulties and potential campaigns destabilisation from Syria and Iraq.

By coincidence her visit came the day the final shipment of Jordan's military aid for 1998 arrived at the Red Sea port of Aqaba. The \$25 million (£15 million) worth of infra-red equipment, anti-tank weapons, ammunition, telecommunications equipment and spare parts, bought the total of American aid for the year to \$76 million.

The US Embassy disclosed that Washington was planning to provide a further \$425 million worth in military aid over the next three years to the tiny kingdom.

Mrs Albright's impromptu trip was also seen as an attempt to press US influence with the new ruler to be, who is known for his closeness and affection for Britain, having a British mother, and who went

to school and university in Britain. The King also served in the British army.

"Mrs Albright will not have said anything, but we all know America was muted that Prince Hamzah with his American mother, Queen Noor, was not the son chosen to succeed," one European diplomat said.

On the record, the Secretary of State spoke warmly of Prince Abdullah and said they had "no expectation of change" after his replacement of Hassan, deposed after 34 years as Crown Prince and seen as a potential focus for discontent.

"Abdullah is not an unknown quantity, he is very much a chip off the old block," said one senior US official, reflecting a widely-held view here that the Sandhurst-trained major-general and fearless parachute enthusiast has inherited many of his father's qualities.

In an open letter to the ailing King, now once again receiving treatment in the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, Prince Abdullah pledged to follow in his footsteps. Hundreds of advertisements taken out in the Jordanian press sought to emphasise the same point to prevent domestic splits. "This cub is from the lion king," declared one advertisement.

## Israelis accused of hiding smallpox virus

FROM ROSS DURN IN JERUSALEM

ISRAELI Health Ministry has been accused of placing its citizens at risk by holding the smallpox virus in its laboratories, in breach of international agreements.

A report in today's Hebrew daily *Yedioth Aharonot* will allege that the virus is not properly secured, placing in danger those members of the public who have not been vaccinated against the disease.

In a response to the report the Health Ministry said that its employees did not work with the smallpox virus in its laboratories but it stopped short of saying it had samples.

"I am shocked if this is true, it makes my flesh creep," said Professor Eitan Rubinstein, an infectious diseases expert at Tel Aviv University.

At the end of the 1970s, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the disease had been eradicated and stopped its vaccination programme. In the years following the announcement member countries of the WHO, including Israel, agreed to destroy stocks of the virus in their laboratories: the virus had been kept for research purposes and to develop inoculation material.

The newspaper claims that some officials in the Israeli Health Ministry decided to ignore the agreement and continued to secretly hold samples of the virus, along with other types of dangerous material.

"Despite the clear danger to public health, the virus is kept in defective security conditions, and close to densely populated areas," the newspaper alleges.

Up until a few months ago the virus was being kept in a laboratory at Jaffa Road, the main thoroughfare in Jerusalem, according to the article.

Dr Lindsay Martinez, an expert on smallpox for the WHO, said "The decision to destroy the virus applies to all member countries in the organisation. If there are laboratories which hold samples or any of the virus material, that is a dangerous and serious act."

## Northern Iraq air defences come under renewed attack

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

AMERICAN military jets attacked an air defence site in northern Iraq yesterday as Washington underlined its determination to confront Baghdad's repeated challenges to the no-fly zones despite civilian casualties earlier this week.

Two F15s fired three precision-guided missiles in self-defence at the site near Mosul after they were targeted by Iraqi anti-aircraft fire, according to a spokeswoman at Incirlik airbase in southern Turkey, from where British and American aircraft police the northern air exclusion zone.

Personnel at the base earlier donned suits to protect against a chemical weapons attack after a false alert of a possible Iraqi missile launch.

On Tuesday US warplanes attacked five sites in the Basra area, a day after a stray 2000lb missile struck a residential area in the southern

city of Basra itself. Iraq said at least 11 people died in what it portrayed as a deliberate attack on the civilian population.

Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, said that every effort would be made to avoid civilian casualties, but accused President Saddam Hussein of "putting his own citizens in harm's way by hiding his military assets in civilian communities".

She was speaking in Saudi Arabia after holding talks on Iraq with King Fahd and other Saudi leaders who have been vilified by Baghdad for supporting last month's Operation Desert Fox. Mrs Albright later told American troops at an airbase outside Riyadh that provides support for aircraft patrolling the southern no-fly zone. "You are the delivery system for a simple message to Saddam Hussein - quit bullying your neighbours." But senior Saudi officials appeared

keen, in public at least, to distance the kingdom from Washington's call for Saddam to be removed from power.

"They made clear that they were not going to come into the war, and we agreed," said James Rubin, Mrs Albright's spokesman.

Washington has offered military and financial support to several Iraqi opposition groups and appointed a diplomat, Frank Ricciardone, who was travelling with Mrs Albright, to co-ordinate the effort to topple Saddam.

Baghdad's Iraq has started to reconstruct Baghdad buildings which were damaged in the US-led air and missile strikes last month, including two buildings of the ruling Baath party: the Al-Zawra weekly newspaper reported yesterday. It was the first time that the damage to the Baath party buildings has been reported in Iraq. (Reuters)

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## Saudis give US troops luxury base

Prince Sultan Air Base: US troops in Saudi Arabia will move on February 23 into a new high-security housing complex capable of accommodating up to 7,000 people.

The Saudis have built the \$104-million complex with bomb shelters, perimeter sensors and barbed wire. The 4,300 Americans enforcing Operation Southern Watch over Iraq will have a swimming pool, gym, squash courts and library at the base, 40 miles south of Riyadh.

Madeleine Albright, US Secretary of State, told troops there yesterday: "With your help we will continue to enforce the no-fly zones and leave no doubt that we will respond to provocation." (AFP)

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# Hungry and homeless go on looting rampage



Survivors of quake are left without aid, writes Gabriella Gamini in Armenia

CHAOS and violence reigned in Armenia's stricken earthquake zone as thousands of homeless and hungry survivors went on a looting rampage. They claimed that no emergency relief had arrived since 20 cities and villages were hit by the quake on Monday.

In Armenia, the shattered capital of Yerevan province, looting began on Wednesday morning after desperate survivors awoke to a third day without food or water, huddled in makeshift shelters. The frenzy soon spread across the city. Yesterday desperation led hundreds to fight their way into supermarkets and grocery shops in neighbouring Calaca and La Tebaida.

Meanwhile Colombian Red Cross officials confirmed that 880 bodies had been recovered from debris across Quindio, and said that attempts to find more survivors had been hampered by heavy rain. The death toll is expected to rise — Armenia officials believe it will exceed 2,000 — since only 30 per cent of the disaster area has been searched so far. Rescue teams and government officials still hope to find people alive under rubble, but as the search continued, Armenia's centre became a battle ground for looters and police, with local officials trying to co-ordinate aid workers.

Hundreds of dishevelled survivors clubbed and tore their way into one major supermarket branch in the heart of the city. Dozens ran out with a few goods while others had trolleys loaded with food, laundry paper and bottles of mineral water.

"This is not stealing," said Jaime Ramirez, who clutched bags of flour, beans and sugar. "My children have eaten nothing but bananas and have drunk only a few sips of water in the past 48 hours."

"We have not received as much as a glass of water from the Government," said one woman who stuffed potatoes and onions into a sack. "We are desperate."

Police and troops, deployed on Wednesday to prevent other supermarkets being invaded, were reported to have fired shots in the air and engaged in hand-to-hand scuffles.

But the officers I saw allowed looters through, saying: "These are people who have lost everything and are scrambling for food because they are starving." By yesterday afternoon, Armenia had been scoured for every morsel in the shops.

Colonel Dagoberto Garcia,



A looter is arrested in Armenia where Colombian earthquake survivors clashed with police and troops yesterday

Armenia's police chief, said the spree had not been spurred by hunger alone. "I saw TV images of people running out of supermarkets with bicycles and jewellery. That would not be the case if they were just hungry," he said.

The Government admits, however, that its relief operation has been inefficient and slow. On hearing of the looting, President Pastrana yesterday flew to Armenia to take charge. "We have to show the people that we have not abandoned them and that relief is on its way," he said.

Cecilia Ramirez, head of development for Quindio's provincial government, said: "The situation is critical. Only 5 per cent of the aid to survivors has been sent and handed out." Another state official said: "There is too much bureaucracy. As we sit around discussing what to send where, people are going hungry and thousands are dying under rubble." He called Red Cross, firefighting and civil defence teams "chaotic".

Government officials in Bogotá said more than 94 tonnes of food, water, tents and medical supplies had been gathered at Caram Air Force base outside the capital. Journalists have seen supplies being sent, but when goods reach Armenia, according to one city airport official, most have been delivered to corrupt local leaders who are selling them at high prices.

At the Bogotá headquarters of Solidarity Centre, an aid organisation to which Colombians have sent donations for victims,

boxes of food and medicine stood in the rain. "No one has come to collect them and we don't know when they will be sent," said a worker. Bad administration of foreign aid is not new. When funds poured in after the 1985 mud and rock avalanche that killed 25,000, swallowing the Andean town of Tolima, millions vanished, allegedly pocketed by corrupt local officials.

Nahora Pastrana, the President's wife, made a television appeal saying: "Be patient, we

are sending tents, food and help for the children." International aid of \$20 million (£12 million) has been pledged to help to restore the once prosperous coffee growing region. Britain has bought \$50,000 of medical equipment and lavatories and donated another \$100,000 to a medical charity.

Nineteen British firefighters and rescue workers were flown into Armenia on Wednesday night and teams of Russians, Mexican and Japanese experts have arrived

with modern searching equipment. One boy, 16, has been saved after three days under a collapsed five-storey building in Armenia. Three corpses had been recovered on Wednesday before rescuers heard the muffled calls of Daniel Andres.

"Here I am, Mummy. Don't worry, I am OK," Daniel, who suffered back injuries, said.

Later, he said he drank his urine to stay alive. "But I never gave up because I could hear people's voices."

## Jakarta opens way to political freedom

FROM PATRICIA NUNAN IN JAKARTA

INDONESIA paved the way for a new era of political freedom yesterday as the country's Parliament unanimously approved sweeping reforms that promise democracy for the first time in four decades, and the military announced that it would comply with the will of the people on independence for East Timor.

The 500-member House of Representatives (DPR), once a rubber stamp for the ousted President Suharto, passed the laws after a special three-hour sitting and cleared the way for elections on June 7.

"What has been achieved today will be recorded in our nation as a new chapter heading towards the birth of a government which stands on the basis of the sovereignty of the people," Syarwan Hamid, the Home Affairs Minister said.

The reforms include a reduction in the DPR seats reserved for the military to 36 from 75, an end to restrictions allowing only three political parties and a proportional representation system for voting.

News of the reforms came as General Wiranto, head of the Armed Forces, announced that the military would accept the people's wishes for East Timor despite the great sacrifices and loss of life made by the Indonesian army.

"We have always pulled together to do the best for East Timor... If it is decided that East Timor is no longer part of Indonesia, of course... we will comply with it," he said.

The announcement fuelled speculation of an early release for Xanana Gusmao, the East Timorese political prisoner who led the separatist movement pitted against an occupation force that now numbers 20,000 Indonesian troops.

Indonesia invaded East Timor in 1975 and declared it its 27th province a year later in a move that is still not recognised by the United Nations.

Yesterday's dramatic developments came a day after Ali Alatas, the Indonesian Foreign Minister, announced that the Government would propose opening the issue of granting East Timor full independence to legislative debate for the first time.

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# Official loses his job after colleagues are niggardly with knowledge

A LINGUISTIC confusion has revealed just how strained are race relations in the capital. A local government officer has lost his job for using the word "niggardly", which has no relation to "nigger" but was deemed by colleagues to be offensive. David Howard, who is white, reached for the word, which is believed to have originated in the 18th century, to explain at a meet-

## Damian Whitworth reports on the high price paid for remark deemed racist

ing that he was going to have to be miserly with a government fund. "I will have to be niggardly with this fund because it's going to cost a lot of money," he said. Two black aides looked stunned and one stormed out. Mr Howard

tried to apologise but to no avail. When the worker who had walked out demanded an apology, Mr Howard said, he was given no chance to explain the word he was using. Rumours flew, complaints flooded in and Mr Howard, per-

haps a little hastily, resigned as head of the Office of Public Advice, handling citizens' complaints. Anthony Williams, the black Mayor, accepted the resignation. Again, perhaps, he too was too hasty. He said his aide showed poor judgment even though he "didn't say anything that was in itself racist". Later, he backpedalled a little, launching an investigation and suggesting Mr Howard might

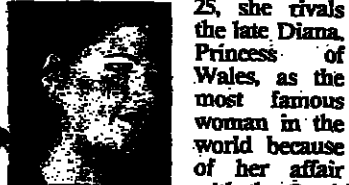
be allowed to return to the staff, but in a different job, if he is ultimately judged to have done nothing wrong. "There's quite a bit of hubbub, quite a bit of buzz about it," said Kojo Nnamdi, black host of a talk-show. "It's indicative of the state of race relations in Washington. A simple explanation should have sufficed. When it comes to race in Washington, apparently a simple

explanation doesn't get it." Many others have argued that Mr Howard was guilty of failing to realise the word could be confusing. Marcus Marshall, 22, a black employee in a sporting goods store, said Mr Howard did the right thing in stepping down. "I don't agree with him saying that kind of word. He should be punished because it's so close to a degrading word."

The offending word does not even appear in *Forbidden American English*, a dictionary of 1,400 "highly offensive and often inflammatory" words and phrases. The possibility of confusion, however, is raised in *A Dictionary of Modern American Usage*. The word has no connection to the racial slur, it says, but some speakers and writers have come to shun it to avoid misunderstandings.

## Questions Senators want to ask key witnesses

MONICA LEWINSKY: Now 25, she rivals the late Diana, Princess of Wales, as the most famous woman in the world because of her affair with the President.

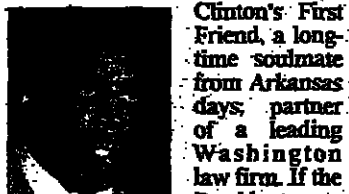


dent, first exposed a year and a week ago (Bronwen Maddox writes). Maximum sensation value, but then pickings for the prosecutors.

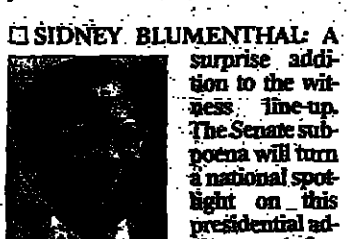
Meanwhile, the Senate risks annoying Americans who would dearly like her testimony to be televised, but will otherwise have to make do with Andrew Morton's book. Just possibly, she could help prosecutors to stand up their charge of perjury — but only if they interrogated her about which "body parts" the President touched.

Ms Lewinsky has already testified that she thinks the President was not obstructing justice in giving her gifts or getting her a job.

VERNON JORDAN: He is Bill Clinton's First Friend, a long-time southerner from Arkansas days, partner of a leading Washington law firm. If the President confided in anyone about Monica it would have been Mr Jordan, many believe. Prosecutors want to ask him about whether his efforts to get Monica a job were an attempt by Mr Clinton to obstruct justice.



SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL: A surprise addition to the witness line-up. The Senate subpoena will turn a national spotlight on this presidential adviser and former journalist, a shadowy but central figure in the Clinton entourage. Passionately loyal to the Clintons, and a particularly good friend of Hillary, he has worked closely with Downing Street on "Third Way" policies. Prosecutors want to question him on whether the President deliberately lied to him about Monica before Mr Blumenthal gave evidence at the grand jury.



Mease killed a couple and their teenage grandson

# Democrats deride Senate 'show trial' as public tires of political wrangle

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

THE White House began to focus yesterday on the new peril of a criminal prosecution of President Clinton after he leaves office, as the Senate trudged on with what Democrats have jeeringly dubbed a "show trial".

The White House team is split between political advisers who want to "quit while we're ahead" and allow the trial to wrap up early, and legal eagles who fear that this could expose Mr Clinton to later criminal prosecution.

Trent Lott, the Senate Majority Leader, maintains that a deal which ends the trial within two weeks is still possible. But yesterday many from both sides said that that was wishful thinking.

The "show trial" jibe stems from Democrats' new confidence, after Wednesday's twin Senate votes, that Republicans will never muster the two-thirds majority to oust Mr Clinton from office. But huge uncertainty over the length and conduct of the trial remains, with the White House's response the most important wild card.

The White House yesterday tried to blame the Republicans for extending the trial by voting to call witnesses, while keeping open the option that it might prolong the process by summoning its own witnesses in turn.

Joe Lockhart, a spokesman, said: "We'll make a decision on whether

we need witnesses when the managers have finished their part of the process."

Americans understand, he claimed, "that the fact that this trial continues to go on is the responsibility of the Republican majority". The new worry for the White House is that a quick trial could leave unchallenged testimony which might be the basis for a future prosecution of Mr Clinton even if he remains in office.

They are also concerned that the "compromise" of censuring the President without removing him from office could add to Mr Clinton's future legal risks, if the motion said that he broke the law.

Despite the White House's fears, there is growing support from senators of both parties to bring the trial to a rapid end, following signs that public tolerance is ebbing.

A Gallup/USA Today poll published yesterday found that 57 per cent of voters disapproved of the way that Senate Republicans were handling the trial, and that only a third approved.

But in a clear warning for Democrats, the percentage of voters approving of the way they are handling it has fallen by eight points to 45 per cent in just two weeks. Democratic Senator Carl Levin of Michigan said yesterday: "A prompt ending is the number one priority in my book, even though it may

mean some unfairness to the President, who by rights should have the opportunity to call his own witnesses."

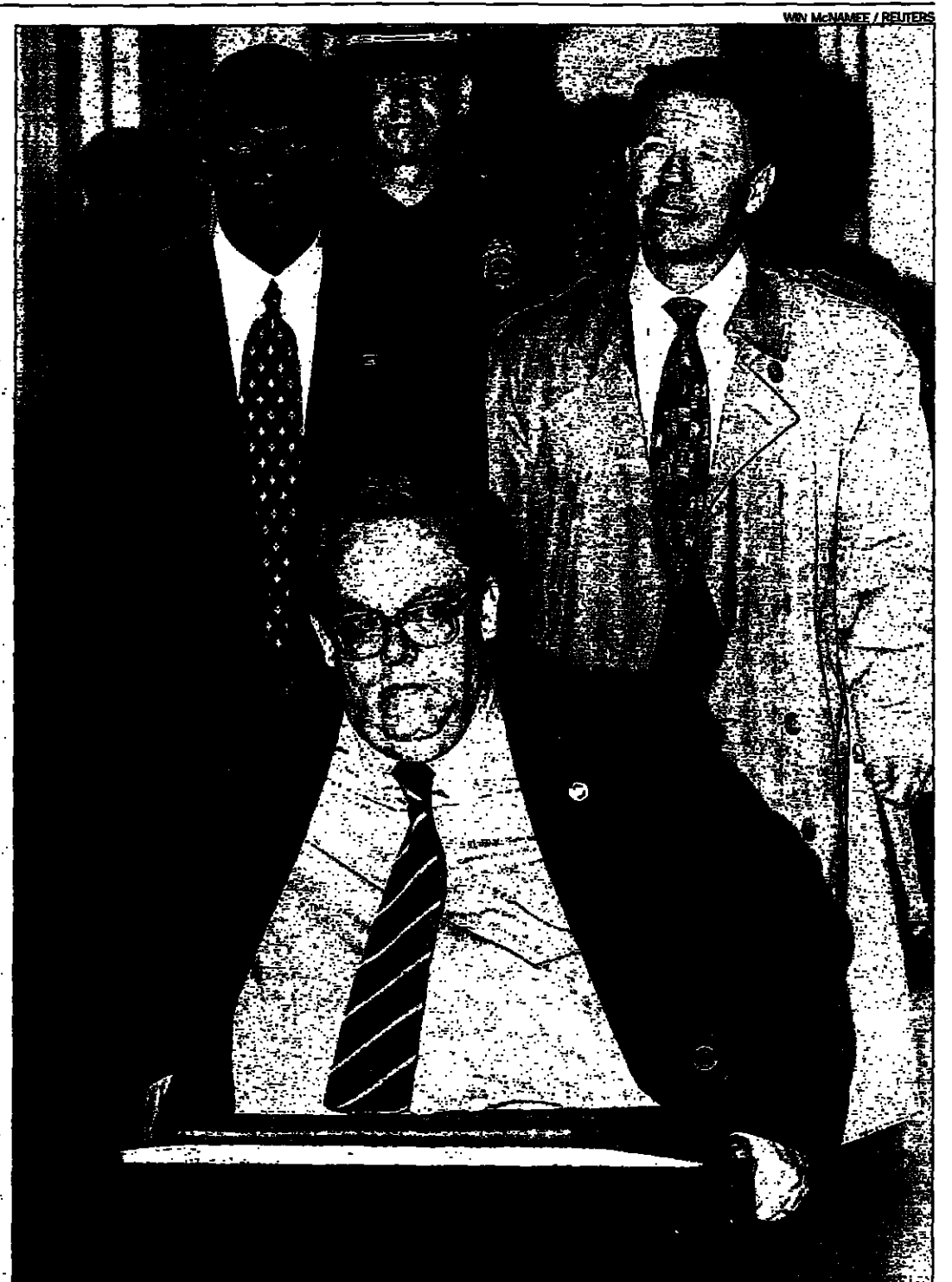
As the Senate yesterday struggled to reach a deal, Mr Lott returned again and again to the Senate floor to ask the presiding judge, Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist for more time.

In the Senate corridors, senators pined anxiously, waiting for bells to ring to signal a return to the floor, or for the beepers with which each one has been equipped to alert them that their party was summoning them for yet another huddled meeting to gauge support for the latest plan.

The toughest sticking point yesterday afternoon was whether to have live witnesses or to have videotaped testimony, and if a recording was made, whether it should be released to the public.

Jobs bill: Aiming to boost the skills of workers, Mr Clinton is proposing \$965 million (£592 million) in new spending to retrain workers, teach illiterate adults to read and increase job opportunities for youth at risk.

The latest budget details include increased grants for adult literacy programmes, a free telephone number connecting displaced workers to unemployment and retraining resources, and \$50 million to create jobs for disadvantaged youth.



White House defence lawyers Charles Ruff, centre, and David Kendall, right, at the Capitol

## Plea by Pope saves triple killer from death sentence

Jefferson City, Missouri: A personal plea by the Pope led yesterday to a convicted triple murderer having his death sentence commuted to life without parole.

Darrell Mease had originally been scheduled to die at the same time as the Pope was visiting Missouri this week. Mel Carnahan, the Baptist Governor of the state, said: "In reaching this decision, I took into account the extraordinary circumstances of the Pope's request and the historical significance of the papal visit to St Louis and the state of Missouri. I continue to sup-

port capital punishment, but after careful consideration of his direct and personal appeal, and because of a deep and abiding respect for the pontiff and all he represents, I decided last night to grant his request."

Mease, convicted of murdering a drug partner, the man's wife and their handicapped teenage grandson in 1988, had been scheduled to die yesterday — the second day of the Pope's two-day visit.

The execution date had been set in November by the state Supreme Court. Four days later, the court

changed it to February 10. The court gave no reason but many believed it was because someone had realised the first date coincided with the papal visit.

The Pope praised the Governor's decision as a gesture of "profound humanity". The Mease case was a rare victory for the Pope, who has seen pleas to spare other US inmates in Missouri and other states rejected.

He spoke out strongly during his visit against capital punishment. Mr Carnahan declined to spare the life of another inmate for whom

the Pope had sought clemency in 1991.

Joaquin Navarro-Valls, the Vatican chief spokesman, noted that Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Vatican Secretary of State, had met privately with the Governor during the Pope's stay in St Louis this week to present, in the pontiff's name, a request for clemency for Mease.

Last year the Pope asked his envoy in Washington to relay his appeal for Karla Faye Tucker, who was convicted in the 1983 pickaxe slayings of two people in Houston. She was executed. In July 1997 the

Pope's appeal on behalf of Joseph O'Dell, an inmate in Virginia, galvanised a campaign in Italy against capital punishment. O'Dell was executed for the 1985 rape, torture and murder of a woman in Virginia. By the time of O'Dell's appeal, the Pope had made about a half-dozen pleas for clemency by US authorities.

An early, more publicised one was for Paula Cooper, in 1987 an 18-year-old death-row inmate in Indiana. She had stabbed an elderly Bible teacher. Her sentence was commuted to 60 years. (AP)

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# The mysterious power of hats



"My own sense of the mysterious power of hats came early. At five I declined to be parted from a woollen bonnet shaped like an old-fashioned pram hood, with a whalebone horseshoe to hold it around the face."

Every garment tells a story, but of all the clothes in the wardrobe, the most loquacious is the hat. Hats are aphoristic. Like it or not, by wearing one, you are allowing the essence of your personality to be revealed by an indistinct hemisphere of stiffened fabric.

It is not just monarchs, guardsmen and cardinals who find themselves reduced to a symbol by their headgear. Think of all the other hats that have become a kind of shorthand for the person underneath them — Dot Cotton's shrewish turban; Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's sweet-pea Dok; Lady Vardens; Benny from *Crossroads*; pathetic woolly tea cosy and its tough-guy antonym, the black knitted skull-cap fancied by burglars, terrorists, members of the special forces and anyone else up to macho no good in the shrubbery.

Then there are mouldy green

cowpats favoured as leisurewear by denizens of the House of Lords and working men's clubs, and the remarkable head sculpture modelled by Isabella Blow — the Peggy Guggenheim of modern millinery.

My own sense of the mysterious power of hats came early. At five I declined to be parted from a blue and white woollen bonnet. It was shaped like an old-fashioned pram hood, with a springy whalebone horseshoe to hold it firm around the face and a white pom-pom on the back. I wore it continually, indoors and out, for some weeks. Looking at the photographs, I suspect I had decided that it was better than the ruthlessly ugly pudding-bowl haircut underneath it.

There followed a battle — or rather a seven-year war of attrition — against the loathsome school hats (grey felt in winter, rigid straw in summer) to be worn at all times outside the school gates. Unable to

defend them on aesthetic grounds, our headmistress fell back on science, arguing that a column of heat rose straight out of the top of our heads, to be wasted in the surrounding atmosphere, unless we trapped it under our hats.

It didn't work. We ran about bare-headed, doing our bit for global warming, until the day we left school, when our interest in millinery unaccountably revived. I had, in quick succession, a little black beret like a French Resistance heroine, a large felt halo, as worn by Colette's Gigi, a hunting bowler with a veil like the one belonging to Trollope's dashing Vi Effingham, and a Persian lamb toque, for looking gloomy on stations in the manner of Anna Karenina.

These days, if I had a literary fashion icon, I suppose it would be Tabitha Twitchet, who is so ground down by domesticity that she goes about hatless. This does not mean, however, that I have lost

interest in hats. On the contrary, a good hat can have, at a fraction of the cost, the same result as a facelift, offering a dramatically flattering background for a pretty profile, or making eyes seem huge and jewel-like. It is an effect not lost on Lady Weinberg, who is often photographed peering out from under a cartwheel brim with eyes like sapphire headlamps.

If you feel the need for this kind of lift, now is a good time for hat-hunting. A hat is, as scientifically demonstrated by my headmistress, an essential shield against the weather. And if your shield should happen to come from Philip Treacy or Stephen Jones — well, whose business is that but your own?

Since it is midwinter the shops are filling up nicely with pastel cruise wear. But pockets persist, in the bigger stores, of winter hats, satisfactorily reduced. One of the best sales is at Liberty, where a glossy faux beaver flowerpot by

Stephen Jones is £84 (£169); he also does an amazing, furry, broad-brimmed curate's hat, £16 (£220), and if you had a winter wedding to go to, you could divert all eyes from the bride in his black velvet cartwheel trimmed with white marabou and black cocks' feather, £297 (£995).

Less flash, but just as chic, are Philip Treacy's black felt fez trimmed with curled cocks' feathers, £77 (£125), his felt leopard-print pith helmet, £12.50 (£225), and his giraffe-print bowler with curled feathers, £87.50 (£175). If you insist on a sensible hat, Liberty's own-label faux beaver flowerpot with a large furry bow is £20 (£39). Heather Allan's brown and silver Davy Crockett hat with two dangling tails is £130, and Fred Bare's lilac quilted-satin trapper's hat, lined in fake fur, is £42 (£85).

At Harvey Nichols, Gilly Forge's black "mink" with a turn-up brim is £49.95 (£100); her "snow leopard"

toque is £55 (£110) and a super-glam white "mink" pillbox by Philip Somerville is £31.95 (£65). Accessorize has jolly striped ski hats for £9.99 (£12.99), a gypsies' black velvet hat with crimson embroidered roses, £12.49 (£24.99), a pale blue angora buncher's-boy cap for £7.49 (£14.99) and a rubbery black bouclé hat with a face-framing brim for £12.49 (£24.99).

So far, I have bought nothing. I think I am trying to decide between Broara's cashmere pull-on, £19, Agnès's small black cloud of an angora beret, £40, and L.S. Malson de la Fausse, Rouen's chinchilla, with its endearing paw-print lining, £22.50 (£45).

My son, however, has other ideas. In Peter Jones he spotted Karl Donoghue's wildly eccentric shock of curly black Mongolian lamb. For just £79 (£115), he tells me, I can have a hat that will lend me the violent allure of Dennis the Menace's identical twin sister.

## SIX OF THE BEST

Keep ties neat and tidy

**SILVER WIRE, £5.95**  
Simple flat modern shape holds 10 ties, although they can slip off the metal prongs. Muhl, Harrods, Knightsbridge, SW1 (0181-348 3848). 8/10

**LEATHER, £575**  
Absurdly extravagant, but a beautifully crafted way to store three ties. Hermès, 179 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-823 1014). 8/10

**PLASTIC WALL HANGER, £6.99**  
Unattractive box with weak self-adhesive tabs — it needs to be secured with screws. Holds 30 ties. Leimett Snook, at Selfridges, Oxford Street, W1 (0171-629 1234). 8/10

**STRAIGHT BLOCK, £16.50**  
Smart combination of cedar and brass pins to be mounted on a wall. Takes 24 ties, ideal for a dressing room, but less suitable for a bedroom. Woodlore from The Holding Company, 241-245 Kings Road, SW3 (0171-610 9160). 8/10

**FLAT HANGER, £10**  
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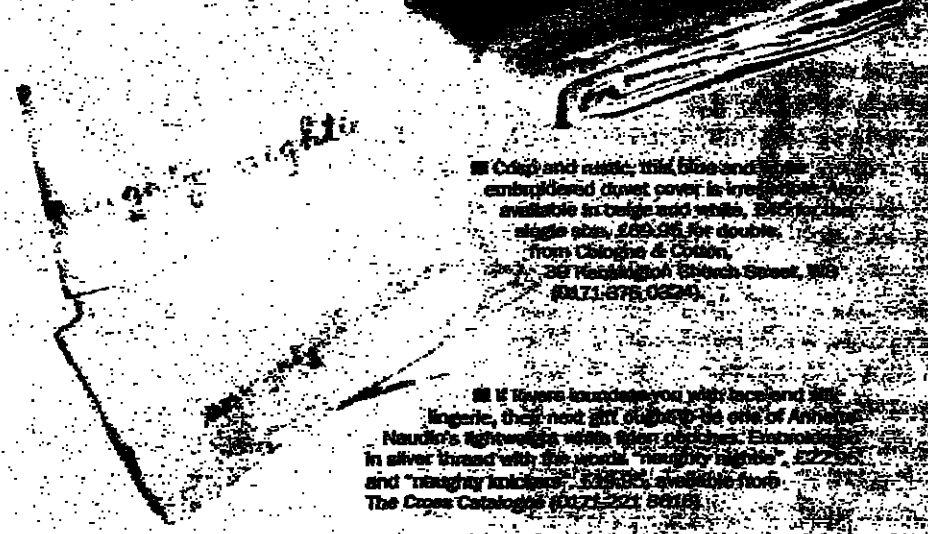
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## THE BELL DEBATE

The Lords, *The Times* and complaints against the press

When *The Times* serialised *Cries Unheard*, Gitta Sereny's book about the child murderer Mary Bell, last spring, we knew that our decision would be controversial. The crimes were terrible; so was the deprived childhood that shaped the killer. We knew that some of our readers would feel strongly that we were wrong, the more so because money had been paid to Bell for co-operating with the author. Sharp emotions were then aroused by the hounding, by tabloid newspapers, of Mary Bell, forcing her to reveal her true identity to her innocent daughter. We went ahead with serialisation, not lightly, but because we were convinced that a clearer understanding of the making of young murderers, and their subsequent handling by the penal system, is firmly in the public interest, and that this book made an important contribution to that necessary exploration.

Last July, after exhaustive inquiry, the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) found that *The Times* had acted entirely within the voluntary code of journalistic practice which it is our firm policy to respect. But so central was the case to questions of freedom, responsibility and the public interest in a democracy that discussion continues. We publish today an extended report of Wednesday night's thoughtful debate on this subject in the House of Lords. The purpose of Lord McNally, who initiated the debate, extended far beyond his seemingly narrow question about "liaison" between the Home Office and the PCC. He sought to make a case for widening the PCC's duties to intervene even when the offended parties do not, as the Bell family did not, lodge a complaint; to give it quasi-judicial powers, including those to impose punitive fines; and for a law to prohibit direct or indirect payments to criminals outright, without the possibility of a public interest defence. The ensuing debate, for which the Lords mustered great legal and practical expertise, not only vindicated the stance of *The Times* in this particular case. The arguments advanced are a necessary corrective to those who, for the sincerest of motives, would wish to see the already extensive restrictions on freedom of information in this country further tightened by statute.

Lord Wakeham, the PCC's chairman,

rehearsed the grounds for its decision that, in the Bell case, there was an "overwhelming" case for serialisation. "The public interest," he said, "oozes from every pore of the book and in turn from the extracts from it which were serialised." It was "the first authoritative account of how the penal system deals with child criminals" and, as such, "was important and deserved a wide audience." It was a view that found broad and authoritative support. Equally significant on civil rights grounds and in terms of Article 10 of the European Convention, were the caveats about a blanket ban on payments to criminals. And although the harassment of Mary Bell appalled their lordships as much as it appalled this newspaper at the time, the debate showed wide understanding that an expansion of the PCC's powers could create more problems, especially for those who cannot afford lawyers, than it would solve.

During the extensive debates on incorporating the European Convention, Lord Wakeham eventually managed to convince the Government that to give the PCC legal powers would be incompatible with self-regulation. It would undermine the PCC's authority with the newspapers which it polices, an authority which Lord Wakeham has greatly reinforced. For the Government, Lord Williams of Mostyn acknowledges that the PCC code already bars the press from making payments to criminals or their associates except where publication is "in the public interest and payment is necessary for that to be done". That, he said, set a "high hurdle" for *The Times* — as it does for any newspaper. We would not wish it to be lower.

We would equally endorse his wider verdict, that there are dangers in "producing an over-formal tribunal", when the purpose is to remedy press wrongs to individuals while recognising that "a free press is bound, on occasion, to overstep the limits". This paper strives not to do so; we are pleased that our judgment in the Bell case has again been widely endorsed. Where truth and sensibilities come into conflict, there can never be an easy balance. Good journalism pursues truth without malice; but journalists know that what they find, and publish, may sometimes test the limits of acceptability.

## POLLS APART

The quality of public services is Blair's real challenge

Twenty months beyond a landslide victory, Tony Blair and his Government continue to defy the laws of political gravity. In the Prime Minister's case it seems that what goes up stays there. After a month in which the assorted antics of Peter Mandelson, Geoffrey Robinson, Charlie Whelan and Robin Cook have rightly dominated the headlines, even committed supporters of the Labour Party assumed that there might be some modest impact on public opinion. In fact, as the MORI polls published in *The Times* over the past two days have illustrated, the Government has not only survived the events of the past few weeks but emerged with enhanced popularity.

This is not to suggest that the country has neither noticed nor disapproved of the display that has been placed before it. More than half of the electorate believes that the Government has not upheld high standards in public life — a sharp decline from the 55 per cent approval on this issue recorded in November 1997. These are not insignificant numbers. And yet the Mandelson affair appears to have reinforced cynicism about politics and politicians in general rather than about Mr Blair and his colleagues. On this, as many other matters, the Conservative Party has not yet rendered itself sufficiently credible with voters to benefit from the Cabinet's discomfort.

The other factor that may explain the extension of this longest of honeymoon concerns perceptions of the economy. The index of confidence (the balance between those with positive and negative economic expectations), which slumped dramatically last summer and reached the extraordinarily low point of minus 46 points in October, has revived to stand at only half that level today. A full-blown recession would still be a powerful threat to Labour's standing. The Government may well,

however, be able to accommodate any slowdown short of such a slump.

Every set of silver linings has a cloud and for Mr Blair the most potent test may prove to be not mass unemployment but expectations of an improvement in the quality of public services. The Government is entering what the Prime Minister has described as "the year of delivery". There is plenty of evidence in our poll that the country is impatiently expecting signs of progress in these quarters. The conditions in the National Health Service (49 per cent), and education/schools (32 per cent), have become the top two issues for the electorate.

Some 47 per cent of voters do not believe that the Government has kept its pre-election promises. Discontent is sharply focused on these key areas. But there is little prospect that the Government will throw pots of money at the problems. Gordon Brown made it clear to both Cabinet and House of Commons yesterday that the public sector pay settlements to be announced early next week must be met within the cash limits that he set six months ago. The fragile balance of the economy has left him little alternative. This means that increased salaries will come at the expense of other initiatives. That in turn will limit ministers' freedom of manoeuvre.

For the past two years the Government has been at liberty to pass blame for public discontent with such services to its predecessor. The end of this period is fast approaching. At that point, if present policies have not persuaded the public of real change, the Government will have to choose between more expenditure and more radicalism. Without a compelling alternative, this may not greatly diminish new Labour's popularity; but it will reveal much more about the political character of the Prime Minister and his Government.

## SOME LIKE IT COLD

Winter in Britain is a terrible disappointment

Where are the snows of yesteryear? Already the days are getting longer, the daffodils are pushing through the earth, the winds are blowing temperately from the South West and, apart from Scotland, barely a flake of snow has fallen. Shakespeare's winter of icicles hanging by the wall is an ancestral memory; Victorian scenes of fur-clad ladies, snowy taverns and snorting horses prancing through the snow now seem more unreal than mawkish. There is as much chance of sunbathing in January as there is of building a snowman. Put away those fur hats: there is no bracing chill to be kept at bay, merely the clinging damp of the latest depression to settle over the British Isles.

For those tired of slush, thaw and premature blooms, Scandinavia may be a last refuge. Lapland has just endured the coldest night in a century, with temperatures of -51C. That is off the scale for

old-fashioned mercury thermometers, and can be measured only by alcohol-based ones. But in such cold, little alcohol is likely to be left undrunk. The Lapps are a hardy lot, but even they find it irksome when power lines snap, sledge dogs have to stay indoors and trains will not stop because the airbrakes fail. The Finns, however, came up with an indigenous solution: they lit their saunas, took off their clothes and spent the night in steamy nudity.

Surviving winter's grip is still a challenge in these northern lands. The temperate British sometimes long for extremes. Some recent summers, though, not the last, have approached Mediterranean heat. But winters are a disappointment. Will Britons ever again be able to roast on the Thames? When will blood be nipped, ways be foul and milk come frozen home in pail? To everything a season: our land may be green and pleasant, but surely not in winter. Some like it cold.

## 'Bill restrictive of news reporting'

From the President of the Guild of Editors

Sir, As drafted, the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Bill, now before a Commons committee (letters, January 25), would have made it impossible to report in any meaningful way the Dunblane massacre, nursery nurse Lisa Potts's heroism or the murder of head teacher Philip Lawrence.

The Bill would have prevented full reporting of the case against Jonathan Aitken for putting lies into a statement by his teenage daughter at a libel trial.

It would also have prevented the newspaper which I edit, *The News of Portsmouth*, from identifying the three teenage occupants of the car involved in a recent crash with a minibus outside Waterloo, Hampshire, in which three people were killed (report, January 6). A fortnight later we are still receiving calls and letters thanking us for revealing their names.

In all these stories, the common factor is the involvement of people under the age of 18 whose identities, even as victims or witnesses, would be protected from the time of any allegation by the intended new law. The Bill would seem to ensure the disappearance of an entire generation from the news reports of almost any form of crime or potentially criminal activity.

This imbalance between shielding vulnerable young people and disclosing, in the public interest, events in which they have become involved is being resisted by editors.

From my own experience in Portsmouth it seems the public are firmly on our side, resenting the imposition of any more restrictive laws which will enable people to escape accountability for their actions.

Yours etc,  
GEOFF ELLIOTT,  
President,  
Guild of Editors,  
Bloomsbury House,  
74-77 Great Russell Street,  
London WC1B 3DA,  
January 28.

## Pinochet proceedings

From Sir Louis Blom-Cooper, QC

Sir, Rarely can there have been a case attracting more widespread public interest than the proceedings before the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords in the Pinochet affair (reports, January 19 to 22).

The Appellate Committee is a committee of that House; the televising of its proceedings is, therefore, not proscribed by the Criminal Justice Act 1925.

We saw their Lordships voting in the Chamber after the conclusion of the earlier Pinochet proceedings in November; but would not the current proceedings have been an occasion on which to experiment with the televising of actual judicial proceedings in this country?

Another opportunity is bound to arise.

Yours faithfully,  
LOUIS BLOM-COOPER,  
138 Oxford Road, NI 1PF,  
January 22.

## Ancient titles

From the Countess of Mar

Sir, In reply to his own question, "Who can lay claim to the oldest title in the Lords?", Alan Hamilton (report, January 21) puts forward Lord de Ros, whose title dates from 1264, and Lord Mowbray, Seagrave and Stourton (1283).

May I respectfully point out that, although Scottish peers were not admitted to the House of Lords until after the Act of Union of 1707, the Earldom of Mar was created in 1114, predating the baronies of Mowbray and Seagrave by 169 years?

As the thirty-first holder of the title, I am also an active member of the House of Lords.

Yours faithfully,  
MAR,  
House of Lords,  
January 21.

## All at sea

From Miss Alison Clayton

Sir, Your report (January 25) on the professionalism of women serving in the Royal Navy off Sierra Leone starts, "Drying panties have replaced pin-ups in HMS Norfolk's cabins". This undermines not only the advances women have made in the Navy since 1991 but the credibility of the report.

I am at a loss to understand what relevance there is, if any, between women's laundry and the work undertaken by both men and women serving within a difficult operational environment.

Yours faithfully,  
ALISON CLAYTON,  
163 Brighton Road,  
Coulston, Surrey CR5 2YH.  
alison.clayton@james.co.uk  
January 25.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

## Viewers' choice on television sex

From Lady Howe of Aberavon, Chairman of the Broadcasting Standards Commission

Sir, No broadcaster likes to be criticised, and David Elstein (letter, January 27) makes, as usual, a spirited defence of Channel 5's position on transmitting "erotic fiction". But can I put the decision of the Broadcasting Standards Commission in context?

The commission has a responsibility under the Broadcasting Act to identify what it sees as developing trends within broadcasting (in this case with regard to the use of sex), to identify what its consequences might be, and to stimulate legitimate public debate.

Our most recent research, *Sex and Sensibility*, published this month (details, January 7), showed clearly that audiences expect sexual portrayal to be justified by its context, whether in drama or a factual programme. This research, in line with that conducted by the ITC, also suggests there is a different expectation about what should be available on free-to-air, as opposed to pay television. The commission took the research findings into account when reaching its conclusions. All of this is a long way, both in time and in tone, from the trial of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*.

After much careful discussion, the commission reached findings on the specific programmes which were the subject of complaint, including sexual violence in a film, *Centerfold*, not mentioned by Mr Elstein. In our judgment the point of these programmes was clearly erotic. These findings are consistent with our recently revised code. We acted throughout within the mandate given by Parliament. There has been no abuse of procedures.

A commitment to "uncut movies" in a licence application is not the same as a specific promise of erotic films, as Mr Elstein appears to believe. But that is between Channel 5 and the ITC.

The commission works openly and independently. The decisions of the

commissioners, all publicly appointed, can be in favour of the broadcaster as well as the complainant. They are all published with an account of the reasoning that lies behind them. That is a useful and important public service on sensitive issues which are a matter of legitimate public interest but about which opinion is divided. The issue is not the commission's relevance but whether the public should have a right to redress.

Yours faithfully,  
ELSPETH HOWE,  
Chairman, Broadcasting Standards Commission,  
7 The Sanctuary, SW1P 3JS,  
January 27.

From the Director of the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association

Sir, It is evident from the sexually explicit programmes and films screened by Channels 4 and 5 that the Independent Television Commission's programme code is defective.

It is, for instance, beyond understanding how the content of the recent 13-part series on Channel 5, *Sex and Shopping*, and *Renegade IV: Sex Bait*, transmitted by Channel 4 last October, comply either with Section 1.5 of the ITC code which states:

The portrayal of sexual behaviour and of nudity must be defensible in context and presented with tact and discretion

or with the Broadcasting Act, which requires that programmes should not offend "good taste or decency".

What is needed, above all, is a regulatory authority which will devise a well-defined code and will have the strength and conviction to enforce it for the common good.

Yours faithfully,  
JOHN C. BEYER,  
Director, National Viewers' and Listeners' Association,  
All Saints House, High Street,  
Colchester, Essex CO1 1UG.  
nationalvala@compuserve.com  
January 27.

## Demand for new farm outlets

From Ms Nina Planck

Sir, Noting agriculture's declining importance to the economy, the Agriculture Select Committee suggests that farmers find something else to do (report, January 20). Collapsing farm prices are bad enough; now farmers must expect less cash support from the EU.

It is true that subsidies — which have led to overproduction and thus to lower prices and rural job losses — are part of the problem. But farmers don't need a new line of work. They need new markets. As the recent success of farmers' markets in most of 15 English towns demonstrates, notably in Bath and Bristol — new customers are both numerous and near.

The definition of a farmers' market is crucial: the seller must grow everything himself. Such markets have greatly benefited small and medium-sized farms in the US: the farmer reaps retail prices (often three times higher than wholesale), the shopper buys fresh, local foods, and the countryside stays economically productive, without recourse to tourism and theme parks.

Rural incomes and employment rise — all without government help.

Yours sincerely,  
NINA PLANCK,  
Islington Farmers' Market,  
6 St Paul Street,  
London N1 7AB,  
January 20.

## Furry friendships

From Mr John Hanner

Sir, I cannot agree that, as the subheading on Matthew Parris's article, "Furry friendships" (January 23), put it, "a fanatical devotion to animals is a disturbing sign of a damaged personality". It may be the reverse.

Impassivity towards animals and creatures generally would likely extend itself to the human species.

Affection and fondness is a desirable trait and is of considerable benefit to creatures, humans and the donor.

(The article is also at variance with the author's previous item, "In love with llamas", of November 21, 1997.)

Yours faithfully,  
JOHN HANNER,  
Little Calf Cood,  
Kingwood, Raglan,  
Monmouth NP23 5DS.  
jhanner@compuserve.com  
January 24.

## Online MPs

From Mr Nicolas Owen

Sir, The problem with e-mail in general and publishing e-mail addresses of Members of Parliament in particular (letter, January 27) is that anyone with five minutes spare and nothing to do can create needless work and expense for others by sending trivial messages that require acknowledgement.

This being a classic case in point.

Yours faithfully,  
NICOLAS OWEN,  
1 Bruce Grove,  
Orpington, Kent BR6 0HF.  
n.owen@compuserve.com  
January 27.

From the Editor of Farmers Weekly

Sir, I take exception to your leading article of January 20, "Farming fashions", in which you attack *Farmers Weekly* for "belatedly" announcing that "organic systems have come of age".

If your suggestion that the few hundred people who shop at Spitalfields market reflect a long-standing demand were true, consumers would not need to trek to Spitalfields: a full range of organic food would be available in their local high street store.

The fact that this is not so reflects most consumers' indifference to organic production. Although it may sell well in Hampstead and Islington, how many people in Hull or Ipswich care about organic food? All the evidence suggests not many.

*Farmers Weekly* jealously guards its reputation as a fiercely independent magazine, serving the whole farming industry. We are not, as you allege, "in large part financed by the advertising of agrochemical industries".

Less than a third of our revenue is derived from display advertising, and agrochemical companies account for a small proportion of that revenue.

Yours sincerely,  
STEPHEN D. HOWE,  
Editor, *Farmers Weekly*,  
Quadrant House, The Quadrant,  
Sutton, Surrey SM2 5AS,  
January 21.

## Christians in India

From Mr Randhir Singh Bains

Sir, Your leader today, "Christians in peril", rightly expresses concern over the plight of Christians in India. However, I query your conclusion that "Christians are vulnerable precisely because they are so few" (2.6 per cent); Sikhs constitute an even smaller minority (2 per cent), yet have so far escaped the Hindu fundamentalists' religious wrath.

Christians are being picked on because, according to the fundamentalists, they are the agents of Western imperialism. Even the Prime Minister could not help doubting their loyalty to India when he wrote in *The Organiser*, the BJP journal (May 7, 1995), that "the other task is to assimilate the non-Hindus, like Muslims and Christians, in the mainstream. They must have a feeling of patriotism for this country."

It is statements like these which are largely responsible for instigating violence and intimidation against the Christian and Muslim minorities in India.

Yours faithfully,  
RANDHIR SINGH BAINS,  
34 Shere Road,  
Gants Hill, Essex IG2 6TG,  
January 26.

From Mr John Young

Sir, "History associates religious persecutions with weak leaders", according to your leading article.

Henry VIII? Elizabeth I? Cromwell? Stalin? Hitler?

Yours faithfully,  
JOHN YOUNG,  
37 Dewhurst Road, W14 0ES.  
johnyo@compuserve.com  
January 26.

## Rewriting history to suit the screen

From Dr Munro Price

Sir, Simon Jenkins ("The camera often lies", January 22) is right: the increasingly cavalier attitude of British film and television to basic historical fact is getting hard to take.

The latest instance, BBC's drama offering of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, inhabits a fantasy world in which Robespierre was in power and the Terror in place in 1792, and France governed by a body, so far unknown to historians, named the Committee of General Surveillance (sic).

Though one accepts the need for some dramatic licence, the current tendency reveals a basic contempt for education and knowledge of the past: it piles on the solecisms, perhaps assuming that we are far too ignorant to notice the distortions we witness, and that if some of us do, we no longer care.

As a teacher of history, who feels strongly that a fair and accurate sense of the past is important for the health of any society, I find this discouraging.

Yours faithfully,  
MUNRO PRICE,  
Department of European Studies,  
University of Bradford,  
Bradford, West Yorkshire BD7 1DP,  
January 24.

## Unmistakably British

From Mr Duncan Francies

Sir, Philip Howard is right (article, January 22): Britishness is unmistakable. I have lived almost two years in this charming country, trying every day to be accepted as just another ordinary Greek guy. But the more I try the less I succeed.

Is it my slightly pink face and lack of decisive authority? Is it my ancient Burberry in the winter and M&S slacks in the summer? Should I chew gum and smoke cigarettes? Should I get angry and wave my arms about when they refuse to speak back to me in Greek?

And why do they speak English anyway, not French, German, Italian or Albanian? If anyone can tell me what it is about me that declares my nationality with such certainty at a hundred paces, please tell me. I will change it at once.

Yours faithfully,  
DUNCAN FRANCIES,  
17 Himaras Street,  
Poliheia, 145 62 Athens,  
January 22.

From Miss Gabrielle Higgins

Sir, Philip Howard is mistaken on the subject of croquet. It is in fact played in the US, Australia, South Africa, Egypt, Spain and France, to name only a selection of countries.

What marks croquet out among games invented in Britain is that the British have remained the best in the world.

Yours faithfully,  
GABRIELLE HIGGINS  
(Secretary,  
Oxford University Croquet Club),  
Merton College, Oxford OX1 4JD.  
gabrielle.higgins@merton.oxford.ac.uk  
January 23.

## Owners' rights

From Mr Sam Gratton

Sir, The legal advice offered me by Mr Neil Howlett (letter, January 20), regarding the discovery that a shabby "antiques shop" below a flat I had intended to purchase was in fact a brothel, was as informative as it was irrelevant.

Far from being a drawback, the proximity of the brothel was a welcome bonus. It was, as your article in *Weekend* (January 9) made clear, the prospect of it being converted to a kebab shop that worried me.

Yours etc,  
SAM GRATTON,  
51 Drayton Gardens,  
South Kensington, SW10 9RX.  
sam.gratton@hotmail.com  
January 21.

## A day to remember

From Mr R. K. Ellis

Sir, Is it spin, or merely a slip, that the entry of the UK into the Common Market in 1972 should be listed under Deaths in your Anniversaries column today?

Sincerely yours,  
R. K. ELLIS,  
2 St Elmos Road, SE16 1SA,  
January 22.

## Ungrateful taxman

From Dr Vivien Noakes

Sir, As the January 31 deadline for the submission of tax returns approaches, what a morale lift it would be if, instead of threats of fines for late delivery, the Inland Revenue were to write to each one of us at the end of the year to say thank you for the hard work and often long hours which have made possible our donation to the national coffers.

Yours faithfully,  
VIVIEN NOAKES,  
146 Hamilton Terrace, NWS 9UX,  
January 25.







## OBITUARIES

## MAJOR-GENERAL MICHAEL HALFORD

Major-General Michael Halford, DSO, OBE, GOC 43rd (Wessex) Division, 1964-67, died on January 4 aged 84. He was born on October 28, 1914.

MICHAEL HALFORD came from a family closely associated with the York and Lancaster Regiment. His grandfather, fought with the 5th Dragoon Guards at the Charge of the Heavy Brigade in the Crimea. His father served in the 1st Life Guards and was wounded at Spion Kop, while serving under his future father-in-law, Lieutenant-Colonel (later Brigadier-General) W. T. Kirkpatrick. Halford went on to command the 2nd Battalion York and Lancasters on the Ypres Salient, 1915-16, and the 1st Battalion after the war. Previously, in 1897, Kirkpatrick had been with the 2nd Battalion in the troopship *Warren Hastings*, which ran on to rocks at night and sank off Réunion on passage to Bombay. He is said to have been instrumental in ensuring that no lives were lost.

In Halford's own thirty years' service in the Army, he probably saw more action than any of his ancestors: pre-war, the Arab revolt in Palestine and internal

security in Egypt; then, during the war, Dunkirk, the Tunisian and Italian campaigns and the later phases of the war in North-West Europe and post-war, the early occupation of Germany, anti-British rioting in the Sudan, intelligence work in Hong Kong, withdrawal from the Canal Zone in Egypt, and the Suez landings. Educated at Wellington College, Michael Charles Kirkpatrick Halford did not follow the usual route into the Army via Sandhurst. Instead, in 1932 he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he took a degree in maths and modern languages. While at Cambridge, he was granted a TA commission in the Grenadier Guards. In 1935 this was replaced by a regular commission with a year's ante-date, when he followed his father into the York and Lancaster Regiment (Y&L).

The Regimental Colonel has described him as: "Not an easy man to know, but very well liked, particularly by his contemporaries. Ladies loved him probably because he was handsome to start with and 'could be quite a smooth'. He gave the impression of being a gentle soul and very much the gentleman. As a military commander I never heard

anyone criticise him. He was well regarded by all ranks and considered to be one of the Regiment's high fliers."

Gentle soul or not, he was an outstanding commander of the 6th Y&L, which he joined as adjutant in 1939 when they were raised as the 6th Hallamshire (TA) Battalion of the Y&L — Hallamshire being the old name for the Sheffield area. After Dunkirk, where the battalion formed part of the rearguard, he was sent to the Staff College, Camberley, and after a number of minor staff jobs, set off for Tunisia as Brigade Major of 138th Brigade in 46th Division, which included 6th Y&L. He saw action in the defence of Medjez-el-Bab and the recapture of Sedjenane, permanently losing the hearing in one ear after driving over a mine.

After Tunisia, he returned to 6th Y&L and landed with them at Salerno. He took part in the crossing of the Volturno, the capture of Monte Camino, the attack on Monte Cedro and the crossing of the Garigliano before being sent to the US Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1944, when the battle-experienced North African



divisions were withdrawn to England to prepare for Overlord. He had been mentioned in dispatches for a second time and was later appointed MBE.

Returning from the States, he rejoined his battalion for the storming of Le Havre, after which he took over as second-in-command, seeing further actions in Belgium

and Holland during the battles for the Rhineland, including the second Battle of Arnhem. He assumed command of the battalion in March 1945, taking it on through the rest of the campaign, finally liberating Utrecht on May 7, 1945. He was awarded the DSO for his part in the capture of Arnhem.

After the war, he had to revert to major and mark time like so many other successful battalion commanders. By 1952 he was back with the 1st Battalion in Germany as second-in-command just before it left for the Sudan to garrison Khartoum. He at last regained his rank of lieutenant-colonel in 1953 when appointed GSO1 (Intelligence) in Hong Kong. A year later he was given substantive command of the 1st Battalion, which was by then in the Canal Zone making ready for the British evacuation of Egypt. The battalion had barely settled into Dover Castle after the evacuation when they re-embarked for the Suez landings in 1956. They reached El Cap, one third of the way down the Canal to Suez, when Eden ordered the ceasefire.

Advanced to OBE after Suez, he went as an instructor to the Imperial Defence

College in 1957 before being appointed Brigade Colonel of the Yorkshire Brigade two years later, and subsequently Brigade Commander of 147th Infantry Brigade (TA), based around Birmingham. By 1963 he was Chief of Staff Western Command and was seconded for three months to report on the defences of the dissident Radfan tribal area in the Aden Protectorate and to visit Oman.

His last job in the Army was to command 43rd (Wessex) Division (TA), around Taunton. He was offered a further appointment as Chief of Staff, Far East Command, but chose to retire in 1967. He had been appointed Representative Colonel of the Y&L in 1966 and had the distressing task in 1968 of overseeing the disbandment of the regiment, which had been formed in 1758, and which his family had served for three generations.

In retirement, he became a deputy lieutenant of Hampshire and regional secretary of the British Field Sports Society. He also continued his links with the TA and the Royal British Legion.

He married Pamela Joy Wright in 1945. They had three sons. She and two sons survive him.

## AUGUST EVERDING

August Everding, German opera director and administrator, died from cancer in Munich on January 26 aged 70. He was born in Bottrop, Westphalia, on October 31, 1928.

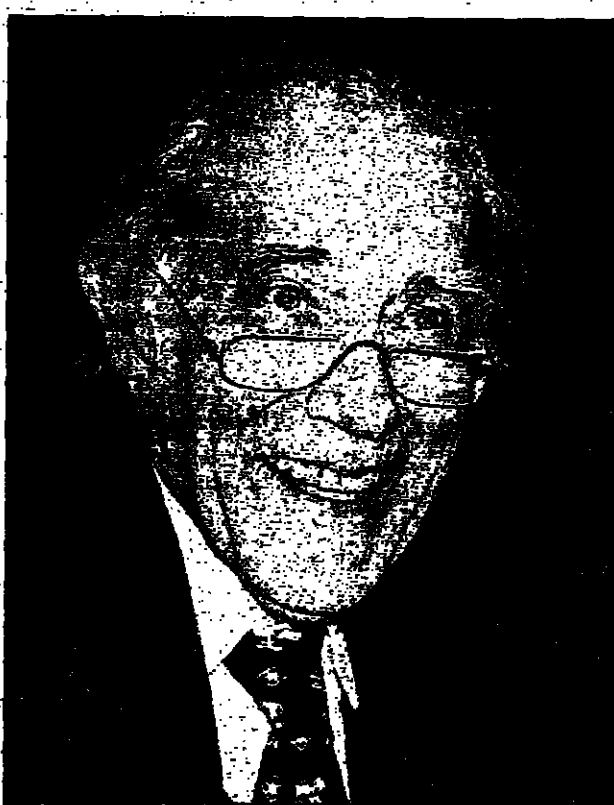
Within the first month of the year Europe has lost two of its most distinguished opera administrators. Rolf Liebermann died at the beginning of January and now he has been followed by August Everding, the man who succeeded him as director of the Hamburg State Opera in 1972.

Everding spent only four years in Hamburg, but that was long enough to show the city that his skills as a stage director were as assured as his ability to run an opera house which, under Liebermann, had acquired international status. Everding's lifelong passion for Wagner and Richard Strauss was quickly made plain. So was his readiness to take on contemporary opera, although he had already demonstrated this when in 1963 he had staged Humphrey Searle's *Hamlet* there.

In 1976 he was lured away by Munich to take charge of the Bavarian State Opera. Everding was born in Westphalia but Munich probably had the perception to know that he was a Bavarian at heart. And it was in Munich that he became artistic king and made his home. It is the city with which he will always be associated.

Within a few years Everding's success at the State Opera led to his being given control of all Munich's subsidised theatres, of which the Opera was just one, albeit the most important. When even Bavaria had to tighten its financial belt it fell to Everding to do the job of cost-cutting.

As so often the Opera was the first to suffer, much to the fury of Wolfgang Sawallisch, the music director who had been established there since



Everding: a lifelong passion for Wagner and Strauss

1971. Arguments between the two men often made the headlines in the German press. It was noticeable that Sawallisch in his tribute to Everding earlier this week concentrated on the work he had done in founding the Bavarian Theatre Academy and restoring the famous Prinzregententheater, which had long been closed. Both men had more than a touch of the autocrat. Everding remained revered in his adopted city.

August Everding was the son of an organist and was thoroughly well-schooled in music. He learnt to play the piano, organ and flute and then went to the universities of Bonn and Munich to study theology. He was a deeply committed Roman Catholic, a fact which was sometimes concealed from those who saw him only as a brilliant administrator and rarely reluctant *bon vivant*.

After leaving university he moved into the straight theatre, with the Munich Kammer-spiele. There he directed many plays, with the emphasis on contemporary drama, and there Peter Stein was among those who benefited from his encouragement.

Everding's success at the Kammer-spiele led to an invitation in 1965 to direct his first opera, *La traviata*, at the Staatsoper itself, which he was eventually to run. The house turned out some of its most distinguished regulars for the occasion: Teresa Stratas, Fritz Wunderlich, Hermann Prey.

However, the production which set Everding truly on the operatic path came in 1967 with *Tristan und Isolde*. Birgit Nilsson was the Isolde and Karl Böhm conducted. This led quickly to invitations from Bayreuth, for *The Flying Dutchman* in 1969, followed by *Tristan*. That latter opera

became an Everding speciality and with it he made his debut at the New York Met in 1971 at Rudolf Bing's instigation. It marked the start of a solid association with the house.

Covent Garden saw only two examples of his work. The first was Strauss's *Salome* in 1970, a glittery, jewelled staging, reworked from Hamburg, with Grace Bumbury in the title role, Norman Bailey as Jokanaan and Solti conducting. He returned in 1979 with a more fanciful *Magic Flute*, with Ileana Cotrubas as an enchanting Pamina and Colin Davis in the pit. It remained in the Garden repertoire until 1991. The *Flute* was one of the pieces to which Everding returned several times. His version for the Savonlinna Festival in Finland came back just a year later.

Everding had a reputation for being something of a traditionalist as a director, sticking closely to the demands of the composer and librettist. But he was capable of springing a surprise or two, as he did in a *Don Giovanni* for Paris in the early Seventies.

He was always ready to embrace the new and step outside the regular repertoire. He championed Carl Orff, staging *Die Tempora* fine comedy at the Salzburg Festival and, most recently in Augsburg, a revival of *Die Bauern*, a highly Bavarian piece almost certainly close to his Bavarian heart. The 1991 Munich Festival opened with Penderick's *Ubu Rex*, directed by Everding. While still running the whole of the Munich musical scene, he found time to stage a complete *Ring cycle* in Warsaw in the late 1980s.

He received many honours and awards in Germany and his natural air of authority ensured that he was president of a number of opera and theatre associations within and without his native land.

August Everding is survived by his wife, Gustava, a doctor, and by four sons.

## ORLANDUS WILSON

Orlandus "Dad" Wilson, gospel singer, died in Paris on December 31 aged 81. He was born in Chesapeake, Virginia, on August 27, 1917.

CONQUERING America with their swing-influenced harmonies and later introducing European audiences to their music, the Golden Gate Quartet became one of the best-known and most widely copied gospel groups in the world. A key member of the group was the bass singer Orlandus Wilson, who was the anchor for Willie Johnson, Henry Owens and Bill Landford as they developed their innovative "jubilant" style of singing — an invigorating blend of syncopated rhythms borrowed from the Holiness churches of Virginia, superb harmonies and vocal percussive and instrumental sounds.

Their repertoire, although gospel-based, included traditional and topical songs. Their Second World War flag-waver *Stalin wasn't Stalin* was revived in the 1970s by the former Soft Machine drummer Robert Wyatt.

The Quartet was founded, suitably enough, in a barber's shop in the Norfolk, Virginia, suburb of Berkeley in the early 1930s. The hairdresser A. C. "Eddie" Griffin and the bass vocalist Robert "Peg" Ford recruited high school glee club members Owens and Johnson to accompany them in the new jubilee style of quartet singing. Johnson, recalling the formation of the group's style, said in 1980: "We were singing in every church that let a quartet sing in it. The main churches that got to me were the Holiness churches, because they sang with a beat. And whenever I got around to training the group, I'd give our things a beat."

By 1935 the group was touring locally, and Griffin, satisfied that he had set the group on the road to stardom, went back to his barber's shop to be replaced by Landford. The elderly Ford, who had begun to miss dates because of sickness, retired in 1936 to be replaced by Wilson, who had spent his early life in Hodges Ferry, a small rural area near Chesapeake.



The Golden Gate Quartet, with Orlandus Wilson second from bottom

peaks. The group now had its classic line-up, the showy, stylised Landford, the melancholy Owens, the witty and sly Johnson and underneath it all, Wilson with his superb sense of swing and timing.

With regular radio appearances, the Gales soon became one of the most popular gospel acts on the scene, and it was not long before they came to the notice of the record scout Eli Oberstein, who worked for the Bluebird label, a budget label run by the mighty RCA. In 1937 Oberstein recorded the quartet in an hotel in Charlotte, North Carolina, where in just two hours they recorded 14 numbers — all but two of them in just one take. Their debut release, *Golden Gate Gospel Train*, became their theme song.

## SIR REGINALD WILSON

Sir Reginald Wilson, former Chairman of the National Freight Corporation, died on January 1 aged 93. He was born on July 10, 1905.

REGINALD WILSON was one of the most successful of those accountants who by their energy and merit came to direct some of the most powerful corporations in the country. From his earliest days he had a concentrated eye for financial success. He often told the story of his inquiry in the 1920s into the smash of Swedish Match Company and of his grateful astonishment when he found that the company could be made viable.

In the 1930s he used the same techniques when he was Comptroller of the British Transport Commission to pronounce that British Railways could perfectly easily earn profits if only £1,500 million were spent on modernisation. In this case, however, the success he sought notoriously did not materialise. It was left for Dr Beeching, later in the 1960s, to set a new course for the railways.



Yet Wilson had a great and lasting success when, after leaving the railways, he became chairman of the Transport Holding Company and later of the National Freight Corporation. He found a true niche as head of organisations in which he could decentralise the management into comparatively small and homogeneous subsidiary companies. The virtues of this policy for the Transport Holding Company were so apparent to the Government that the Transport Act of 1968 bore Wilson's unmistakable stamp. In tune with his unflagging energy, he spoke often about

his professional objectives. Papers to the British Association and the Institute of Transport led him to the presidency of the latter body in 1957. He was a compelling speaker, often deliberately provocative. Abandoning all pretence of intellectual neutrality, he provoked equal and opposite reactions, but, as he well knew, not the least of his achievements was stirring people into action.

Reginald Holmes Wilson was the son of Alexander Wilson, Educated at St Lawrence, Ramsgate, and at London University, he became a Scottish chartered accountant and then served in Whitney, Murray & Co, becoming a partner in 1937. Subsequently he joined Brown, Fleming & Murray. Soon after the outbreak of war he went to the Treasury. In 1941, after a term in the Ministry of Shipping, he was appointed Director of Finance in the Ministry of War Transport. In 1945 he became Under-Secretary in the peacetime ministry.

Soon his activities widened. He served on the 1947 Royal Commission on the Press, the Control Commission in Ger-

many, the Hemel Hempstead Development Corporation (as vice-chairman), the New Towns Finance Committee (as chairman) and the North German Iron and Steel Council.

In 1947 he took the step which led to his industrial success — into transport as Comptroller of the British Transport Commission. In 1953 he widened his scope as a member of the British Transport Commission, subsequently becoming chairman of the Eastern and then the London Midland Railway regional boards. In 1962 he left the railways for the Transport Holding Company as deputy chairman, rising to chairman in 1967. In 1969 he became the first chairman of the National Freight Corporation.

He was knighted in 1951 and among his distinctions were the Award of Merit of the Institute of Transport in 1953 and the presidency of that institute in 1957.

Reginald Wilson was twice married and is survived by his second wife, Sonia, whom he married in 1938, and by a son and a daughter of his first marriage.

## PERSONAL COLUMN

## FOR SALE

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new, we have decided to sell in the private nursery market but other aspects but is highly profitable.



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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY JANUARY 29 1999

## Ford agrees £4bn deal to buy Volvo's car division

By ADAM JONES

FORD has fought off competition from Fiat to agree a deal to buy Volvo's passenger car division for £3.9 billion.

Volvo, which is keeping its commercial vehicle activities, also revealed that it will close its only UK factory — a truck assembly plant in Irvine, Ayrshire — in July 2000 with the loss of 250 jobs. The Swedish group cut 250 other jobs at Irvine before Christmas, when it withdrew bus assembly work.

Ford's foray across the Atlantic is the latest outbreak of merger mania in the global car industry, which is hurting from too much manufacturing capacity and the high cost of developing new vehicles. It follows the purchase of Chrysler by Daimler-Benz last year.

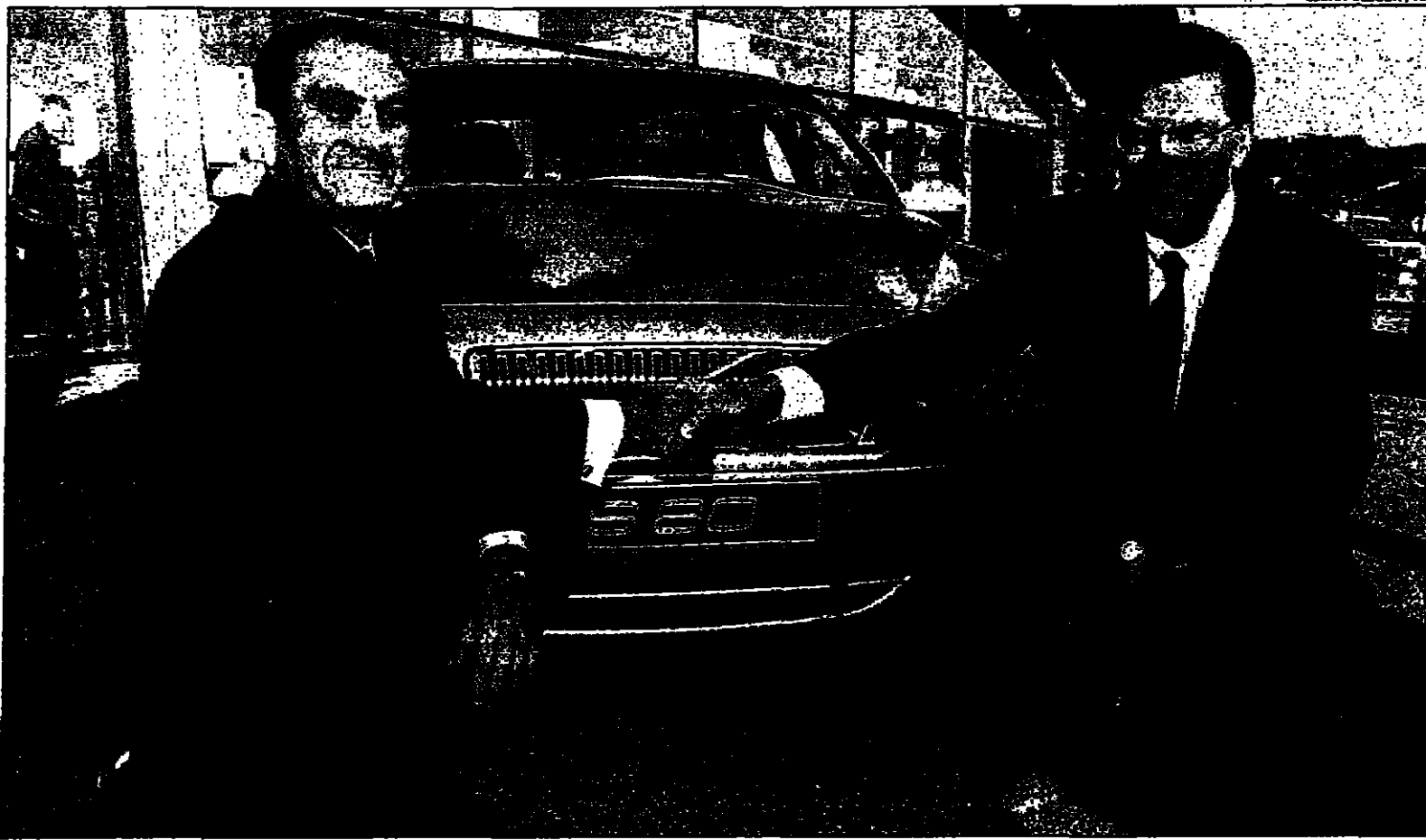
Volvo said its car business, which had sales of about £7.6 billion last year, needed economies of scale. The sale focuses Volvo on buses and trucks, construction equipment, engines and aerospace. It is expected to launch a bid for Scania, its rival truckmaker in Sweden.

Volvo bought 13 per cent earlier this month, a move Scania likened to a hostile bid.

Shares in Henlys, the UK bus and coachmaker, rose from 428p to 472p yesterday amid speculation that Volvo would seek to increase its stake. Volvo bought 10 per cent last year.

Fiat admitted yesterday that it had wanted to buy all of Volvo, not just the passenger car division. Volkswagen was also thought to want the car operation but a source close to the deal dismissed speculation that General Motors had been interested.

Ford, the second-biggest car group in the world after Toyota, sold about 6.8 million vehicles last year. Volvo sold about 400,000. Ford said its success with Jaguar, the UK luxury carmaker that it revived and expanded, showed that it can run



Jac Nasser, left, yesterday sealed the purchase of Volvo's passenger car division with Leif Johansson, the Swedish group's chief executive.

a foreign subsidiary at arm's length without blurring its identity, tradition and appeal.

The Volvo name will be used by both Ford and the rump Volvo. A joint company has been set up to own the brand and license it to both.

Ford said the deal would enhance earnings in the first year. It said Volvo had a following among female and young buyers who cannot afford its existing luxury cars, Jaguar and Lincoln.

Ford may distribute Volvos alongside its own cars and is likely to broaden the product range. New Volvos may eventually be developed jointly

with other Fords, using common "platforms" to save money. From 200,000 last year, Ford wants to sell 700,000 luxury cars in 2000, including Volvos, and then increase this to a million in the new millennium. It said it was too early to say how the deal would affect UK plants but there appear to be no great fears for job losses. Volvo's car operation employs 190 in the UK. Up to 5,000 work in independent dealerships selling Volvos.

The future of Volvo's production joint venture with Mitsubishi in The Netherlands is in danger. Jac Nasser, Ford chief executive, said it would continue

for now. The Ford deal is likely to be put to Volvo shareholders in March for approval.

The Volvo trucks work lost from Irvine will be transferred to underused plants in Belgium and Sweden. The timing of the closure announcement angered union officials, who said that they had been asked to prepare a business plan to save the plant, which they were due to discuss with Lord Macdonald of Tradeston, the Scottish Industry Minister, yesterday afternoon. The AEEU said a further 500-1,000 jobs were indirectly threatened by the closure.

Driving seat, page 33

TENTH OF WORKERS JOIN FOREIGN LEGION

## TRW bid could see fresh offer for Lucas

By PAUL DURMAN

FEDERAL-MOGUL, the US car components group, is considering mounting a counter-bid to TRW's £4 billion takeover offer for LucasVarity, the UK-based manufacturer of braking and fuel injection systems.

TRW, a leading American producer of steering and suspension systems, ended days of speculation with a cash offer worth 280p a share that was recommended by LucasVarity's board.

However, some analysts believe TRW has failed to land a knockout blow, and that Federal-Mogul's interest could drive the bidding as high as 320p a share. LucasVarity's shares ended 7p higher at 290p.

Federal-Mogul, which has tabled a conditional 280p offer, demanded that it should have access to any information that LucasVarity has provided to TRW. The Takeover Panel will force LucasVarity to comply with this demand.

The TRW deal would allow Victor Rice, LucasVarity's chief executive, to take over as head of the enlarged group's automotive operations. It is believed Dick Snell, Federal-Mogul's chairman and chief executive, sees no role for Mr Rice if his bid should succeed.

LucasVarity has agreed to pay TRW £30 million if its offer fails. Joe Gorman, TRW's chairman and chief executive, hopes to wring \$200 million (£121 million) of savings from the deal by the end of 2001, suggesting the need for substantial job losses among LucasVarity's 51,000 employees.

TRW, smaller than LucasVarity by market value, believes the deal would produce an immediate enhancement to its earnings — even before any synergies. The deal, the largest cash acquisition in the auto component industry, would create a group with sales of £11.5 billion.

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## BUSINESS TODAY

FTSE 100 5872.5 (-3.8)  
Yield 2.75%  
FTSE All Share 2591.14 (+7.5)  
Nikkei 14342.32 (-107.74)

New York 8281.07 (+80.84)  
Dow Jones 8281.07 (+80.84)  
S&P Composite 1281.84 (+18.47)

Federal Funds 4.75% (4.75%)  
Long bond 102.00 (107.75)  
Yield 5.125% (5.125%)

3-month interbank 5.75% (5.75%)  
Libor long 120.03 (120.11)

New York 1.6475 (1.6487)  
London 1.6475 (1.6521)  
Paris 1.4432 (1.4382)  
SF 2.3255 (2.3025)  
Yen 193.53 (190.65)  
£ Index 105.5 (104.8)

Tokyo close Yen 115.48

Brent 15-day (Apr.) \$11.00 (\$11.00)

London close \$284.05 (\$284.55)

Exchange rates Page 30

\* denotes midday trading prices

Premier plan

Premier Farnell shares recovered 18 per cent after the chief executive of the distributor of electronic components unveiled plans to invest £30 million a year in an attempt to revitalise its businesses.

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Sorry Save

Save Group, Britain's largest independent petrol retailer, has been hit hard by Esso's long-running Pricewatch campaign, prompting it to pass payment of a final dividend because of an anticipated fall in 1998 profits. But chairman James Frost believes the outlook for 1999 is brighter.

Page 31

## Experts see rates going under 4%

By ALASDAIR MURRAY, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

INTEREST RATES are set to fall to their lowest levels for nearly half a century as the British economy enjoys a "mild" slowdown, a leading economic think-tank predicted yesterday.

City hopes that the economy will avoid a major recession were also boosted by the latest bank lending data which showed mortgage and credit card borrowing remains firm.

The National Institute for Economic and Social Research (NIESR) forecasts in its latest *Economic Review* that interest rates will fall to below 4 per cent by early 2001, the lowest level since 1955, as inflationary pressures ease and the Government prepares for EMU entry. The economy will avoid an

"outright recession" with growth totalling 1 per cent this year and rebounding to 2.5 per cent in 2000. However, the Chancellor will need to maintain budget discipline to ensure interest rates fall towards European levels.

Figures published yesterday by the British Bankers' Association showed a small rise in seasonally adjusted net mortgage lending in December to £1.21 billion. Credit card borrowing also rose modestly to £4.91 billion, some 4 per cent higher than in December 1997.

Source: www.bba.org.uk

Source: www.bba.org.uk

Source: www.bba.org.uk

Source: www.bba.org.uk

## Yahoo! buys rival in \$3.5bn move

INTERNET mania reached new heights yesterday when Yahoo! agreed to the \$3.56 billion (£2.2 billion) takeover of GeoCities (Oliver August writes).

GeoCities, which helps Internet users to build their own Web pages, floated last autumn at \$9 a share. On the first day of trading its shares shot up to \$90 before falling back to \$50. Yahoo!'s offer values them at \$113. Retail investors stand to make a return of 1,200 per cent.

But the biggest winner — apart from the recently graduated company founders — is a venture capital fund. CMGI owns a 28 per cent stake, which it bought at the bargain price of 67 cents a share. The fund made a \$1 billion profit on its \$5 million investment.

Internet purchase page 30

## Greenspan hits at Internet 'lottery'

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

ALAN GREENSPAN, Chairman of the Federal Reserve, yesterday warned investors that the "hype" surrounding Internet companies had introduced a "lottery premium" into their stock market valuations.

However, Mr Greenspan told the Senate Budget Committee that while the "vast majority are sure to fail", some small companies would succeed and take advantage of the "huge" potential market.

The Fed Chairman added that, despite the "hype and craziness", the frenzy actually showed the Wall Street market working in an effective manner because investors are prepared to shift capital into fresh opportunities before "earnings actually materialise".

Mr Greenspan also repeated his warning that the US economy cannot remain "an oasis of prosperity, if the rest of the world is in serious trouble".

The currency markets, however, ignored his comments, sending the dollar to a record high against the euro. Traders reacted to a string of strong US economic data to conclude that the US economy is in far better health than the European economy and that the European Central Bank will soon cut interest rates.

The euro slipped below \$1.14 for the first time to trade at \$1.1397. The pound also tracked the dollar higher to reach its own record high with the euro slipping from 69.63p to 69.29p.

## Whitbread nursery group up for sale

By DOMINIC WALSH

WHITBREAD'S David Lloyd Leisure arm is seeking a buyer for its Gatehouse Nursery chain, which ran into controversy last summer amid allegations of mistreatment of youngsters at its Enfield unit.

Gatehouse, which formed part of the David Lloyd acquisition in 1995, is one of the UK's biggest operators of private nurseries with 40 sites. Around half are located at David Lloyd Leisure clubs.

Steve Philpott, managing director of David Lloyd Leisure, said: "It is not part of our core business and, following a review, we have decided to sell it. The private nursery market has good prospects but is highly specialised."

Industry sources believe the council's decision to close the Enfield unit last year was a big factor in Whitbread's decision to seek an exit. "It's not what Whitbread are best at and the Enfield problems show the dangers inherent in the business," said one. "It's simply not worth the hassle."

The Enfield unit, which is at a David Lloyd club, has now reopened under the management of Busy Bees, a privately-owned rival and considered one of the likeliest buyers of the Gatehouse business. Whitbread declined to reveal its asking price, although experts believe the 20 stand-alone nurseries could be worth £10 million.

## GRE board urged to accept a suitor

By JASON NISSE

LEADING shareholders in Guardian Royal Exchange were yesterday urging the board of the insurer to accept one of the bids put on the table by Royal & Sun Alliance, Eureka and AXA rather than vote to remain independent.

The GRE board meets today, and is being urged by John Robins, its chief executive, to reject the offers made in favour of a management-led option.

Mr Robins believes this proposal could see GRE valued at 420p a share — or £3.7 billion. The highest bid made in the auction is 390p a share from RSA with Eureka offering 385p and AXA bidding 380p.

However, the RSA offer has met with

opposition from its own shareholders and there is concern about whether Eureka, which is a consortium of six mutual insurers, can raise the finance.

Yesterday a number of institutional investors told *The Times* that they would be unhappy with the board of GRE if it refused the offer on the table. "It is an unacceptable option to follow the management route," said Gerard Griffin of ING Barings Asset Management.

Another leading investor, who did not want to be named, said: "The directors have to know their duty and their duty is to obtain the best price."

Commentary page 31

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# P&D — down but not out



## COMMENTARY

by our City Editor

If anyone had been wondering why the chaps at Phillips & Drew were becoming a touch impatient over some of their investments, the explanation became glaringly clear yesterday. Of the 67 pooled pension funds measured by CAPS, P&D's ranked 67th in the last quarter.

If Tony Dye and his team had put their money into the FTSE 100 at the start of the year and gone on holiday, they would have come back to find it worth almost 15 per cent more. Sadly, they chose instead to hunt for 8 pence and delivered a return of just 9.4 per cent.

Poor Mr Dye has at least been consistent in his view that equity markets are horribly overvalued, although the markets themselves have consistently failed to concur. But many of P&D's chosen stocks have done their best to cool down the indices: a trawl through its portfolio reveals a raft of underperforming companies. While P&D may have divined hidden value in these stocks, too often it has remained hidden. Now, from the bottom of the performance league, it is not surprising that the firm has decided on a more aggressive stance and if management fail to deliver the value, then P&D will.

Sears and Mirror Group have been very public examples of this

pro-active stance, with P&D taking on a pivotal role in determining the future of the company. The fund manager has tried of waiting for these companies to deliver growth: it is now keen to engineer a quick, clean and premium price exit.

Quite what it will do with the resulting cash must be a matter of some concern to the fund manager. Mr Dye's fears for equity markets have led P&D to keep almost 18 per cent of its funds in cash, against the average of just 7.2 per cent. He will have to find something more creative than that to do with the proceeds, if he succeeds in generating takeovers of more of his sickly stocks.

Chemical company Albright & Wilson may be the next to go and Evans Halsey and Usters of Trowbridge are already on their way. At Tay Homes, the management is having to fend off an attack from the Sunley family, which has the fingerprints of P&D all over it. Enterprise Oil, another P&D stock, is in talks with Lasso, which could result in merger terms being

agreed as early as next week.

Other fund managers cottoned on to the idea of shareholder activism long before P&D. Hermes has a special unit dedicated to stirring up under-performers and Prudential often has a stern word with lax managers. But P&D is in real fighting mood. The poor performers who helped to take it to the bottom of the league table will now pay the price.

### Rock and a hard place for Chandler

Sir Colin Chandler may find himself an underserving victim of the P&D lightning. He only took up the post of chairman of Guardian Royal Exchange four weeks ago, yet this afternoon, at GRE's board meeting, he faces a vote that could lose

him his new job. Faced with a bid approach from AXA last autumn, the insurer's board took the wise decision to see if anyone else was interested in buying the company.

Now, having discovered that at least three bidders — AXA, Royal & Sun Alliance and the Eureka consortium — are willing to pay anything up to £3.5 billion, Sir Colin and co should do the decent thing and accept one of them. Which one is the only matter for discussion. Is Eureka's 385p a share in cash a better bet than RSA's 390p in cash and shares? Can AXA be squeezed for a little extra at the last minute? These are the only questions.

Alas, there is a complicating factor. John Robins, GRE's current chief executive, and Peter Owen, the PPP boss who fancies the job, reckon that if the board rejects all these bids, they can sell

off the bits in a way that will deliver extra value for the shareholders. A figure of £20p a share has been mentioned.

The problem Sir Colin faces is that most investors, including P&D, do not want this solution. The insurance market is not a happy place at the moment. Margins are under pressure. There is global consolidation among the big players and specialist operators, like Direct Line, are under-cutting aggressively in lucrative niches. GRE is not a large operator and its disastrous market performance — which saw its shares halve in value in the months before AXA's approach — indicate that it will find life tough if it stays independent.

The investors think that the executive management's suggested route is too much of a risk. Why gamble on an extra 30p a share

when the downside risk is more than 100p a share? As representatives of the interests of investors, GRE's non-executives have to vote for a sale. Sir Colin Chandler may feel like a turkey voting for Christmas, but the alternative could cast him as the David Montgomery of GRE.

### Euro centres battle for their futures

You have to hand it to the French. They may not be any good at attracting business to their financial markets, but when it comes to plotting and diplomacy in the rush to Europe-wide and global exchanges, they are second to none. Eureka, the German-Swiss derivatives exchange that overtook Life with its first generation screen-trading system, has just suffered a big setback to global ambition. Rebel pit traders at the Chicago Board of Trade have voted a deal to tie the two inextricably together via a costly new system. Life itself is eschewing

mega-deals while it sorts out its own cost base. That makes the Euro Globex network stitched together by Paris and centred on France's Maf and the Chicago Mercantile Exchange suddenly look very smart.

Paris was outraged when the London Stock Exchange agreed an almost humiliating deal with Frankfurt to build an EU-wide blue-chip exchange, especially when Madrid joined in. The bourse has finally agreed a rival link with Zürich and is doubtless courting Milan to gather more ammunition. Unfortunately for the great diplomats, the whole lot could end up being run by a man and his dog on the Internet.

### Victory Rice

THOSE who know Victor Rice never believed that the dissent of LucasVarity shareholders would stand in his way for long. Now, with a £4 billion offer from IWK, he is set to gain his wish of moving the company to the United States and the likelihood is that his salary package, as vice-chairman of a US business, will far outstrip the rather generous one he already enjoys. Federal Mogul would not have to do very much to win over LucasVarity shareholders. Having no vacancy for Mr Rice would help.

## Premier Farnell plans £30m reinvestment

By PAUL DURMAN

PREMIER FARNELL, the electronic components distributor, is to invest £30 million a year over the next three years in an attempt to reinvigorate its business.

The "investment plan" for growth is the outcome of the strategic review conducted by John Hirst, the former ICI executive who took over as the group's chief executive last July. It prompted a 29p, or 18 per cent, rise in Premier Farnell's share price to 191½p.

Investors in Premier Farnell have lost more than two thirds of the value of their investment since the company was created

by a controversial Anglo-American merger three years ago. However, the main catalogue distributor business has continued to make profits of about 20 per cent of sales.

Mr Hirst said: "We are reinvesting some of our margin back in the business."

The company will invest about £25 million in new computer systems to create shared customer and product databases, to allow more flexible catalogue production and more efficient purchasing. But it is also having to write off £15 million, or about half the money it spent on systems in the last

couple of years. This is because Premier Farnell allowed different parts of the group to install different and incompatible systems. Mr Hirst said: "I'm not saying it's been entirely wasted. We had to get the systems in to get year 2000 compliance. But they will have a shorter working life than they would otherwise have."

Mr Hirst plans to spend £10 million a year on marketing and developing an electronic commerce capability. Until Mr Hirst's recent appointments of Michael Bell and Angela Walker, the company lacked anyone with group re-

sponsibility for information technology and marketing. A priority is to restore growth at Newark Electronics, the US catalogue distributor that saw a 7 per cent fall in sales in the first half because of a badly handled attempt to reduce price discounting.

Mr Hirst said Newark's sales had not fallen further over the last four months. The group said overall trading was in line with expectations. Premier Farnell is expected to make pre-tax profits of about £110 million in the year just ending.

Tempos, page 32

## Laroche aiming for French float

DOMAINE LAROCHE, one of France's most prestigious Chablis producers, yesterday signalled its intention to float on the French stock market this spring (Dominic Walsh writes).

The company, which has produced Chablis since 1850, accounts for 7.5 per

cent of production in the Northern Burgundy region. It also has a production site in the Langue-doc region, Domaine La Chevallerie, which was founded three years ago to compete with New World wines.

Michel Laroche, chairman, said a listing on the Paris Bourse's Second Marché

would "enable us to consolidate our position as a key player in the wine industry". He hinted that it might be used as the springboard to acquire other vineyards.

In the year to March 1999, it is expected to post sales of Fr170 million (£18 million) and net profits of Fr4.25 million.

## C&G Investment Rates

Effective from 29 January 1999

Amount Invested	Interest Paid	GROSS*	NET*	GROSS*	NET*	Amount Invested	Interest Paid	GROSS*	NET*	GROSS*	NET*
£25,000 or more	Annually	6.00	6.00	4.80	5.70	£100,000 or more	Annually	6.10	6.10	4.88	5.80
£10,000 - £24,999	Annually	5.90	5.90	4.72	5.60	£25,000 - £99,999	Annually	5.75	5.75	4.60	5.48
£5,000 - £9,999	Annually	5.80	5.80	4.64	5.50	£10,000 - £24,999	Annually	5.65	5.65	4.52	5.36
£2,500 - £4,999	Annually	5.70	5.70	4.56	5.40	£5,000 - £9,999	Annually	5.50	5.50	4.40	5.20
£1,000 - £2,499	Annually	5.60	5.60	4.48	5.30	£100,000 or more	Monthly	5.94	6.10	4.75	5.65
£500 - £999	Annually	5.50	5.50	4.40	5.20	£25,000 - £99,999	Monthly	5.80	5.75	4.68	5.52
						£10,000 - £24,999	Monthly	5.65	5.65	4.41	5.22

Amount Invested	Interest Paid	GROSS*	NET*	GROSS*	NET*	Amount Invested	Interest Paid	GROSS*	NET*	GROSS*	NET*
£1,000 or more	Annually	6.00	6.00	4.80	5.70	£9,000	Annually	6.25	6.25	6.00	6.00
£500 or more	Annually	5.84	6.00	4.67	5.60						
£100,000 or more	Annually	6.00	6.00	4.80	5.70						
£25,000 - £99,999	Annually	5.90	5.90	4.72	5.60						
£10,000 - £24,999	Annually	5.80	5.80	4.64	5.50						
£5,000 - £9,999	Annually	5.70	5.70	4.56	5.40						
£2,500 - £4,999	Annually	5.60	5.60	4.48	5.30						
£1,000 - £2,499	Annually	5.50	5.50	4.40	5.20						
£500 - £999	Annually	5.40	5.40	4.32	5.10						
£250 - £499	Annually	5.30	5.30	4.24	5.00						
£100 - £249	Annually	5.20	5.20	4.16	4.90						
£50 - £99	Annually	5.10	5.10	4.08	4.80						
£25 - £49	Annually	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.70						
£10 - £24	Annually	4.90	4.90	3.92	4.60						
£5 - £9	Annually	4.80	4.80	3.84	4.50						
£1 - £4	Annually	4.70	4.70	3.76	4.40						
£0.50 - £0.99	Annually	4.60	4.60	3.68	4.30						
£0.25 - £0.49	Annually	4.50	4.50	3.60	4.20						
£0.10 - £0.24	Annually	4.40	4.40	3.52	4.10						
£0.05 - £0.09	Annually	4.30	4.30	3.44	4.00						
£0.01 - £0.04	Annually	4.20	4.20	3.36	3.90						
£0.00 - £0.00	Annually	4.10	4.10	3.28	3.80						

### Closed accounts offering penalty-free switching

Amount Invested	Interest Paid	GROSS*	NET*	GROSS*	NET*	Amount Invested	Interest Paid	GROSS*	NET*	GROSS*	NET*
£1,000 or more	Annually	6.00	6.00	4.80	5.70	£1 or more	Annually	1.00	1.00	0.75	0.75
£500 or more	Annually	5.84	6.00	4.67	5.60	£1 or more	Half-yearly	1.00	1.00	0.80	0.75
£100,000 or more	Annually	6.00	6.00	4.80	5.70						
£25,000 - £99,999	Annually	5.90	5.90	4.72	5.60						
£10,000 - £24,999	Annually	5.80	5.80	4.64	5.50						
£5,000 - £9,999	Annually	5.70	5.70	4.56	5.40						
£2,500 - £4,999	Annually	5.60	5.60	4.48	5.30						
£1,000 - £2,499	Annually	5.50	5.50	4.40	5.20						
£500 - £999	Annually	5.40	5.40	4.32	5.10						
£250 - £499	Annually	5.30	5.30	4.24	5.00						
£100 - £249	Annually	5.20	5.20	4.16	4.90						
£50 - £99	Annually	5.10	5.10	4.08	4.80						
£25 - £49	Annually	5.00	5.00	4.00	4.70						
£10 - £24	Annually	4.90	4.90	3.92	4.60						
£5 - £9	Annually	4.80	4.80	3.84	4.50						
£1 - £4	Annually	4.70	4.70	3.76	4.40						
£0.50 - £0.99	Annually	4.60	4.60	3.68	4.30						
£0.25 - £0.49	Annually	4.50	4.50	3.60	4.20						
£0.10 - £0.24	Annually	4.40	4.40	3.52	4.10						
£0.05 - £0.09	Annually	4.30	4.30	3.44	4.00						
£0.01 - £0.04	Annually	4.20	4.20	3.36	3.90						
£0.00 - £0.00	Annually	4.10	4.10	3.28	3.80						

## Misys gets boost as banks focus on service

By CHRIS AYRES

BANKS are finally switching their resources from fixing the millennium bomb and making themselves euro-compliant to improving customer service. Misys, the financial software company, said yesterday.

Misys, which also helps banks to offer services on the Internet, said it had seen a surge in demand for front-office software products from traditional banks. It added that demand had also been boosted by the success of newcomers to financial services such as Yahoo!, Virgin and Tesco.

Kevin Lomax, chairman, said: "There has been a big switch from Year 2000 and euro software to new customer service systems. There hasn't been much of this for two years because banks have simply been fixing old systems. In the case of companies such as Yahoo!, they haven't got any old systems."

This demand helped Misys to lift half-year pre-tax profits 57 per cent to £59 million, and sales 62 per cent to £288 million. Earnings per share rose 46 per cent to 7.9p. The strong results assuaged fears over Misys's move two years ago into the difficult US healthcare business, and shares in the company rose 84p to 594p.

However, Misys admitted a slump in the healthcare market having changed its sales focus from large groups, which buy its Vision product, to smaller companies, which buy its Plus Medic product. Mr Lomax ruled out any further diversifications, and announced the sale of eight non-core businesses for £30 million.

An interim dividend of 1.2p (1.05p) is due on April 6.



James Frost, chairman of Save, the independent petrol retailer

## Save to pass its final dividend

By SAREED SHAH

SAVE GROUP, Britain's largest independent petrol retailer, yesterday said that it was passing payment of the final dividend. Save shares fell 14½p to 38p, against a five-year high of 269½p in 1995.

The company, which claims 3.75 per cent of the UK market, said pre-tax profit for 1998 is likely to be £5.5 million, below exceptional, down from £9 million the previous year. The final results are due on March 30.

The company said, however, that it is confident of a recovery in 1999.

James Frost, the chairman, said that if it were not for having to react to a 2p per litre voucher promotion from Esso, which lasted from September last year to January 15, Save

would have matched 1997's £9 million profit.

"Margins just crashed in the final quarter. We had to give everything away. When you're only making 3p a litre, to give away 2p is suicidal," he said.

The company paid 3.2p as an interim dividend — and a 7.1p total last time. Foregoing a final dividend will cost Mr Frost, who holds 5 per cent of the stock, about £200,000.

He said retail prices had already risen in the last week and he expected them to rise further over the year — as the integrated companies and the supermarkets claw back the margins that were lost during the price war that kicked off with Esso's Price Watch campaign, launched in 1996.

## Orchard deal brings windfall

Mark Vaughan Lee, the West Country businessman who presided over the near-collapse of Danks Business Systems, yesterday received an estimated £2.5 million windfall when his local radio company was taken over by GWR, owner of Classic FM.

The company, Orchard Radio, owns four stations in Devon, Somerset and Dorset. Mr Vaughan Lee owned about 10 per cent.

Orchard has been bought by GWR for nearly £26 million. The company made pre-tax profits of £1.2 million in 1998.

### Goodhead declines

Goodhead Group, the printing company, saw pre-tax profits fall to £550,000 from £1.3 million in the six months to November 30. Goodhead attributed the fall to a £6.4 million investment associated with a contract with BT to print telephone directories. Earnings fell to 0.7p a share from 2p but the interim dividend was lifted to 0.3p a share from 0.2p. Shares were down 1p to 29½p.

### Old Mutual fined

The fund management arm of Old Mutual, the South African life assurance company, has been fined for incorrect pricing of four of its unit trusts. The Investment Management Regulatory Organisation fined Old Mutual £20,000 for a breach of its rules between July 1997 and March 1998. Old Mutual fund managers have paid £62,000 compensation to the funds and private customers and will pay Inso's costs of £20,731.

### Creightons loss

Creightons, the perfume and toiletries company that abandoned an agreed takeover of rival Potter & Moore because no one would lend it enough money, said yesterday that the fiasco cost £400,000. It blamed "adverse sentiment" towards small public companies for its failure to complete the £9.4 million deal three months ago. Creightons recorded a pre-tax loss of £1.35 million (£74,000 loss) for the six months to September 30. The shares fell 1p to 8p.

### Barlows raises £10m

Barlows, the property group based in the North West, said yesterday that over the past three months it has sold 17 properties for a net consideration in excess of £10 million. The sales are in line with its intention to reduce borrowings, and, after completion of the sales, gearing will stand at about 75 per cent of net assets. The shares rose 2p to 47p.

## Pension funds' poor show

By ROBERT COLE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

NONE of the so-called big four independent pension fund investment managers has produced above-average returns in their mixed asset portfolios in the past one, three and five-year periods, new research has shown (see Commentary, this page).

Gartmore, Mercury Asset Management, Phillips & Drew and Schroders all fall behind the median performance in the Corbinwood Actuarial Performance Services 1998 survey.

Gartmore, Phillips & Drew and Schroders sit in the bottom quartile. However, Morgan Grenfell, another leading manager, of independently mandated pension fund money, recorded returns placing it in the upper quartile over one and five years, and was above the median for three years.

P&D has attracted much attention for its view that shares have become increasingly overvalued and for its strategy of keeping large proportions of



STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

# Focus on second-liners as FTSE gives up lead

CITY investors have stopped ploughing their money into blue chips, for the time being at least.

Instead they are on the lookout for value and have begun turning their attention to the second-liners. For the second day in a row the FTSE 250 index easily outperformed the top 100 companies, finishing 55.6 up at 4,958.9.

By contrast, a late futures-related sell-off saw the FTSE 100 index give up a lead of 83.4 to finish 3.9 down on the day at 5,872.5 despite the positive start to trading on Wall Street. Total turnover reached 1.3 billion shares.

Sentiment generally remains underpinned by the steady stream of corporate deals and the weight of money finding its way into the marketplace.

Yesterday it was the turn of LucasVarity, up 7p to 290p, after receiving an offer of 288p a share from TRW. If the bid succeeds, a further £4 billion of cash will find its way back into the market. News of the deal provided a further boost to the rest of the vehicle engineering sector. Laird Group, the subject of intense speculative buying this week, firmed another 3p to 202p with the speculators talking of an imminent bid from Fullarton of the US. Henlys was another fast mover, adding 44p to 472p in a thin market, while gains were also seen in Bostrom, 14p to 157p, and Brax International, 7p to 118p.

Bass was the best performer among the top 100 with a rise of 52p to 851p ahead of next week's annual general meeting. Dealers said stock shortages have put the bears under pressure. They sold the stock lower in the wake of recent profit warnings from rivals Whitbread, up 16p to 850p, and Allied Domecq, 5p better at 475p.

P&O, up 28p to 636p, took encouragement from some positive comments from SG Securities, the broker, while Kingfisher rose a further 21p to 649p in response to this week's upbeat trading statement.

HSBC Securities, the broker, is taking a bearish line on the mortgage lenders. It was enough to undermine Abbey National, down 5p to £12.02. Alliance & Leicester, 30p up at 756p, Halifax, 32p to 722p, Northern Rock, 9p up at 488p, and Woolwich, 7p up at 326p.

Christian Salvesen moved off the bottom with a rise of 5p



Lord Hollick saw United News & Media shares advance as Merrill Lynch, the broker, urged clients to accumulate

to 82p with some large lines of stock going through on the ticker. This included a buyer of 318,900 shares at 77p. Other buyers gave 82p for 250,000 shares and 83p for 300,000.

Systems Integrated continued to draw strength from Tuesday's interim results with the price adding a further 9p to 283p. The strength of the share price has been such that

the group was forced to admit on Wednesday that it knew of no reason for the movement.

Cornewell Parker, up 21p at 87p, is in talks that could lead to a bid. Phillips & Drew, the broker, holds a 13 per cent stake. Recent weakness in its share price has made Morgan Crucible more attractive to investors. The price rose 14p to 202p as Merrill Lynch, the broker, up-

graded its recommendation from "accumulate" to "buy". The shares have dropped from a peak of 274p in the past fortnight in the wake of a profits warning. Merrill says the shares have fallen far enough and says a "substantial" share buyback appears to be on the cards. The company is also vulnerable to a bid approach.

Merrill Lynch is also taking an increasingly bullish view of United News & Media, up 23p at 547p, where it is urging clients to "accumulate". It says United, which is led by Lord Hollick, has been let behind by the rest of the media sector.

Bowthorpe, up 14p at 361p, was cheered by the news that the company has appointed Salomon Smith Barney, the US securities house, as its broker. It intends to seek a level one American Depository Receipt facility for its shares in New York.

News of the move into the black by Laser-Scan has meant that the group has been trading profitably during the second half of the year. The company is dependent on low volume, high value business which can be unpredictable. The shares rose 3p to 15p.

News of a bumper contract over several years with British Telecom turned out to be good news for SkillsGroup, up 19p at 214p. The group will supply professional and information technology training.

Majestic Investments shed 15p to 345p after it emerged that Mark Barlow, a director, had sold 200,000 shares at 346p. It reduces his holding to 2.76 million, or 5.26 per cent. Shares of AIM-listed Floral Street were suspended at 23p pending clarification of the company's financial position.

GIUT-EDGED: Investors experienced another lacklustre trading session with prices staging a late rally to close above their lows of the day. Dealers said the absence of any fresh economic news had left the market side-rails.

In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt finished 8p lower at £120.03 as a total of 24,000 contracts were completed. In the cash market, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 long 2p at £152.88, while in shorts Treasury 7 per cent 2002 was 1p cheaper at £107.88. Shares stayed flat with the FTSE 100 rising 3.9p to 5,872.5. The Dow Jones industrial average was up 80.84 at 9,281.07.

Elsewhere in the chemical sector, speculative buying hoisted Croda International 18p to 217p. Laporte 6p to 519p, Yule Catto 14p to 254p and Brent International 7p to 112p.

But ICI finished 24p down at 525p after Wednesday's mark-up. Traders are taking positions ahead of next week's results. There are fears the dividend may be cut following the latest profits setback.

International's attempts to win control of the Mirror Group.

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grated its recommendation from "accumulate" to "buy". The shares have dropped from a peak of 274p in the past fortnight in the wake of a profits warning. Merrill says the shares have fallen far enough and says a "substantial" share buyback appears to be on the cards. The company is also vulnerable to a bid approach.

Merrill Lynch is also taking an increasingly bullish view of United News & Media, up 23p at 547p, where it is urging clients to "accumulate". It says United, which is led by Lord Hollick, has been let behind by the rest of the media sector.

Bowthorpe, up 14p at 361p, was cheered by the news that the company has appointed Salomon Smith Barney, the US securities house, as its broker. It intends to seek a level one American Depository Receipt facility for its shares in New York.

News of the move into the black by Laser-Scan has meant that the group has been trading profitably during the second half of the year. The company is dependent on low volume, high value business which can be unpredictable. The shares rose 3p to 15p.

News of a bumper contract over several years with British Telecom turned out to be good news for SkillsGroup, up 19p at 214p. The group will supply professional and information technology training.

Majestic Investments shed 15p to 345p after it emerged that Mark Barlow, a director, had sold 200,000 shares at 346p. It reduces his holding to 2.76 million, or 5.26 per cent. Shares of AIM-listed Floral Street were suspended at 23p pending clarification of the company's financial position.

GIUT-EDGED: Investors experienced another lacklustre trading session with prices staging a late rally to close above their lows of the day. Dealers said the absence of any fresh economic news had left the market side-rails.

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## MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):

Dow Jones 9281.07 (+80.84)

S&P Composite 1261.54 (+16.47)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average 14042.32 (+107.24)

Hong Kong:

Hong Kong 9360.96 (+86.70)

Amsterdam:

AEX Index 538.98 (+7.38)

Sydney:

ASX 2877.2 (+25.82)

Frankfurt:

DAX 5066.41 (+35.22)

Singapore:

SEAC 1426.02 (+8.42)

Brussels:

SEBX 3405.91 (+42.38)

Paris:

CAC 40 4199.67 (+101.57)

Zurich:

SIX 1450.80 (+16.30)

London:

FTSE 100 5872.5 (+3.9)

FTSE 250 4958.9 (+55.6)

FTSE 350 2777.3 (+3.2)

FTSE 1000 2770.22 (+41.02)

FTSE All-Share 2811.4 (+3.72)

FTSE New Financials 2761.70 (+11.34)

FTSE Food & Drink 158.29 (+0.01)

FTSE Govt Debt 196.86 (+0.07)

Bargain 7689

SEAD Volume 120.1M

US\$ 1.647 (+0.0048)

EUR 1.162 (+0.003)

ESR 118.6

Exchange Index 106.0 (+0.3)

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## No Mickey take

MISYS, the IT company that produces software systems for banks, insurance companies and US healthcare groups, bounced in and out of the FTSE 100 as opinion swung first with the firm, and latterly against it.

Recent worries were that it would make a hash of its move into the US, that it would be hit hard once Year 2000 and euro conversion demand worked through, and that banks were delaying investment in software until after the millennium to bypass expensive Y2K compliance tests. The rather unkind "Mickey Misy" nickname had begun to stick.

All the evidence from yesterday suggests that the fears are largely unfounded. Misys has shown there is a healthy market for its retail or "front-of-house" software products, especially among upstart financial services players such as Virgin and Tesco. This, in turn,

has stimulated demand from the more traditional players and led to the dilution of worries about the US healthcare activities. Half-year profits were up 83 per cent and the firm was quite definitely back in the share price.

Caution is still advised. The company has effected a big strategic U-turn in switching its sales focus from large to small players. The ability to produce like-for-like sales figures for the healthcare division also saps confidence.

Overall, however, future prospects look good. Organic growth is tangible and investors can expect acquisitions too, given the company's ability to generate enormous amounts of cash. Misys burnt off £100 million of debt last year alone. The shares closed 86p higher yesterday at 584p, they trade on a forward p/e multiple of about 35 - relatively cheap for a quality IT company. Buy.

## Bryant Group

BRYANT'S reassuring news on the state of the housing market and on housebuilding, led a welcome rally in the price of its shares yesterday. Bryant stock rose 6 per cent to 88p yesterday. Berkeley did even better, advancing more than 8 per cent to 427p. Others also perked up.

Not before time. Housebuilding stocks have been well and truly hammered in the past year as fears spread about the ability of these residential property companies to withstand the economic slowdown. The recession of the early 1980s certainly hit hard and those had memories have lived long enough to send housebuilding shares to low single figure p/e multiples.

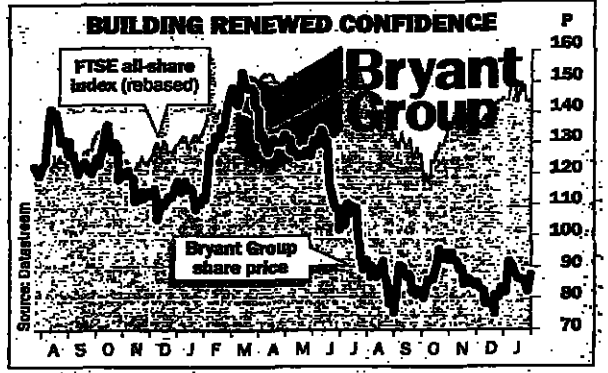
On the evidence of Bryant's figures, the fears about housebuilding shares are over-

## done, big time. The economic

slowdown does not look to be nearly so painful as in the early 1980s. The builders' balance sheets are not nearly as stretched. Interest rates and the ratio of house prices to average earnings are also favourable. Most crucially, the disintegration of the family unit is driving a huge increase in demand for dwell-

ings in this country. As a nation we are becoming more independent - either through divorce, or through the desire to live away from parents.

Planning constraints may mean that builders cannot grow as fast as they would like. But that doubt does not merit the pitiful earnings multiples of 5, 6 and 7 times. Buy Bryant, and buy the sector.



## Premier Farnell

THE 18 per cent rise in Premier Farnell's share price yesterday looks an over-reaction to the company's plan to "invest for growth". If spending money was all it took to create wealth for his shareholders, John Hirst, the new chief executive, would have an easy job.

Admittedly, the shares were looking oversold on less than six times the earnings forecast for the year just ending. However, the electronics distributor has made a comprehensive hash of just about everything over the past couple of years, and its markets still do not look encouraging.

It beggars belief that a large and newly merged company spent £30 million on new computer systems without making sure that the different parts were compatible. A big chunk of Mr Hirst's investment will go on sorting out this mess. The result should be that Premier Far-

nell will be able to produce catalogues with more attractive product offerings. An increased emphasis on marketing, sales training and key customers should also help.

Mr Hirst is a reassuring presence but his company still has much to prove. In particular, it sounds as if Newark Electronics in the US may have some deep-seated problems, and it will not be helped by a slowing American economy. The shares rate an unenthusiastic hold.

## Portsmouth & Sunderland

IT IS decision day for holders of shares in Portsmouth & Sunderland Newspapers, the publisher and convenience store retailer. The tender offer of up to 10 per cent of the P&S shares from Johnston Press closes tomorrow. On the face of it, the tender looks to be one for mugs. At £16.574



# A good case for cancelling the Budget

Alastair Ross Goobey, the chief executive of Hermes Pensions Management who is writing elsewhere on this page, is fond of explaining how, as a special adviser to Nigel Lawson, he offered some of the poorest advice ahead of the 1987 Budget. Stand up, take a sip of your drink and sit down again, Mr R. Goobey recommended. Leave the economy to take care of itself for a year.

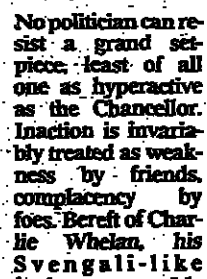
Of course, Mr Lawson (now Lord Lawson of Blaby) ignored these words, embarking instead on a tax-cutting spree with disastrous consequences for the medium-term health of the economy and public finances.

As 1999 Budget day approaches, Gordon Brown could do worse than to heed the same advice. The economy is at one of those delicate moments, where even the most confident economist is

uncertain about the immediate outlook. Growth is slowing, but how far and how fast is anyone's guess. Launching significant new initiatives against this background could have unforeseen and counter-productive consequences as the Lawson tax cuts.

Cancelling the Budget would also be just about the best help that the Government could provide for business. Companies already have plenty to contend with. There are euro and millennium bug contingency plans to prepare. The Government's raft of new workplace legislation needs to be absorbed. Above all, businesses face the tricky task of developing their own response to the downturn. The last thing needed at this juncture is a crop of well-intentioned but complex changes to the tax system.

Sadly, Mr Brown is not going to get up and do nothing.



No politician can resist a grand set-piece, least of all one as hyperactive as the Chancellor. Inaction is invariably treated as weakness by friends, complacency by foes. Beret of Charlie Whelan, his Svengali-like spokesman, Mr Brown will want to show he can still pack a political punch. He is also desperate to give his party, still mired in the post-Mandelson gloom, something to cheer at last.

However, as David Walton, the Goldman Sachs economist, charted earlier this week, the Chancellor has limited room for manoeuvre. Goldman is slightly more pessimistic than the Chancellor about the immediate outlook for the economy, but by no means the most bearish of the City economists. On its calculations, the Chancellor will meet his self-imposed borrowing guidelines, but only just. There is no case for a "giveaway" Budget, which would risk a considerable deterioration in the health of the public finances. At the same time, there is no need for emergency, tightening measures, which risk exacerbating the downturn as well as causing political fallout.

So what will Mr Brown do? The obvious temptation will be finally to unveil the new 10p tax rate, but he will have to find tax rises elsewhere to fund the new band. The last remnant of mortgage interest tax relief is the obvious target, but the Prime Minister may well veto the abolition of this vestige of middle class privilege. The alternative is to replace the existing 20p tax band with the new 10p rate. This has the virtue of maintaining simplicity but, as the Institute of Fiscal Studies calculates, the Chancellor would be able to apply the new rate to only the first £880 of taxable income if fiscal neutrality is to be maintained. Hardly the kind of reform to set the country alight.

Productivity measures will also loom large. Yet it is far from clear exactly where Britain's productivity problems reside. The debate over the past year has, if anything, confused matters, and for every expert who agrees with the Chancellor that the UK lags America, there is one ready to argue that the country's performance is not nearly as poor as imagined. There is a strong argument that the problem can only be resolved by non-budgetary measures such as competition, product regulation and planning law reforms.

## William Ford aims to show he's in the driving seat

Oliver August reports on the car group's deal to buy Volvo and the background to the purchase

Many chairmen have told a rapid audit of their company's performance is what they hold dearest to all the world. But when William Ford Jr says so, he actually sounds genuine. The chairman of The Ford Motor Company, which yesterday bought Volvo's car division, has jockeyed all his life to reach the top post. At the age of 41, the great-grandson of Henry Ford, the group's founder, finally assumed the mantle of power at the family carmaking firm last year.

The Volvo deal is his first big move. William Ford got his chance when Alex Trotman, the British-born executive chairman, retired. Mr Trotman, 65, had been expected to stay a further year but said he chose to go early as the revamping of Ford had proceeded ahead of schedule. This amounted to a huge victory for William Ford. He had been head of the company's finance committee and played a leading role in the turnaround. However, as chairman he has to share power with Jac Nasser, the wily Australian who was made chief executive. The Volvo deal is as much his as William Ford's.

The new division of power at the car group reflects the continued influence of the Ford family that holds 40 per cent of the voting shares. The family has long been the royalty of Detroit, and the subject of intense local interest. William Ford was groomed as a successor at the behest of the family. He is the first family member to lead the company since Henry Ford II bowed out in 1980 after 35 years at the wheel. Henry Ford I was in charge for only ten years from 1908 until 1918.

Mr Trotman said: "Over these past several months, the board has discussed succession following my retirement and has concluded that the roles of the chairman and of the chief executive officer should be separated. Jac is already running the largest part of the company and, with Bill as chairman of the board, we have tremendous strength and continuity as we move forward." William Ford is described as a serious, soft-spoken executive who helped to create a school for gifted children near Ford headquarters.

This is in marked contrast to more temperamental relatives who have had his job. Unlike his great-grandfather, he is unlikely ever to mutter: "You can have your car any colour you like as long as it's black." The new chairman has held a variety of jobs at the company, including managing director of Ford Switzerland, vice-president of the commercial truck centre and head of the climate control division. He divides his spare time between reading about the American Civil War and American football.

His father, William Ford Sr, owns the Detroit Lions team. He has made his son vice-chairman — a move that will endear him to the tens of thousands of car workers employed at Ford. But it wasn't always clear that William Ford would be chosen by family elders to run the car business.

He had an ambitious rival in Edsel Ford, the 49-year-old is also the son of Henry Ford II, who rebuilt the company after the Second World War. But early last year Edsel Ford decided to step down from his post as president of Ford's car lending division and said he would not take another executive position. Since 1991 he had been the president of the Ford Motor Credit Company, which is the world's largest provider of car loans and leases and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Ford Motor. While Ford Credit thrived during the early years of Mr Ford's management, it ran into problems in the past two years.

But given the 40 per cent voting stake of the family, it is unlikely that he was forced out. The real reason for his departure is believed to be his realisation that William Ford had gained a comfortable lead in the race to the top.

Six months later Alex Trotman resigned and set the reshuffle in motion. At the time, William Ford said: "I want to serve this company to the very best of my ability. The Ford Motor Company is my heritage, and has always been part of my life." The standing ovation at the next annual meeting is guaranteed.

# Institutional investors must play part in wealth creation

Shareholder activism was back in the news when David Montgomery was ousted as chief executive of Mirror Group this week. ALASTAIR ROSS GOOBEY runs one of the fund managers behind the move. He explains why investors must play a more active part in the companies that they own.

The subject of corporate governance is moving on again. I hope we may be approaching a time where investors may be felt to be assisting in wealth creation, rather than merely policing their agents. I believe there is a near-universal acceptance that it is in the power of the investing institutions to fill such a role; the question is how, and in what areas?

Just over five years ago, Sir Martin Jacobson (who was then chairman and is now chairman of Prudential) and I decided that we should write to the chairman of the FTSE 100 constituent companies about long rolling contracts for executives. These seemed to us to be the instruments through which failing executives were given large payments to leave the companies they had already harmed.

In 1994, according to research by HayGroup into the top 500 companies, 58 per cent of chief executives had such contracts, and 47 per cent of other executive directors. The 1998 figures suggest that only 2 per cent of chief executives now have these contracts, and there are no other executive directors with them. The three-year contract is no more. Indeed, the Greenbury committee came out in favour of one-year contracts, although there is a fairly even split between one and two years in the universe researched by HayGroup.

Although, of course, I am drawing attention to these results with some personal satisfaction, my point is more general. If one institution, owning between 1 and 2 per cent of the UK equity market, acting on its own initiative, can achieve this change, what may we all achieve if we work together?

In 1993 there were several of



Monty's last stand: pressure from institutional investors, headed by Phillips & Drew, led to the resignation of David Montgomery

our peers who thought ours was a futile gesture. Even if they believed in the purpose, they could see no point in upsetting their clients in pursuit of an unattainable goal. Very few institutions joined, privately or publicly, in pushing for changes in contracts. Yet, because they were indefensible, and because there was enough adverse comment from shareholders to make the subject awkward, the worm turned.

The Government sees the institutional fund managers, or their clients, as the drivers of change in UK industry. They want us all to vote our shares, and to act responsibly as representatives of the ultimate owners. While I have no quarrel with this as a starting point, I am beginning to worry about the specific instruction that the Government seems to be tempted to give us as to how to vote or act, as they see it, responsibly.

Let me give two examples. John Denham, the now ex-Pensions Minister, has, in his recently published consultation document, drafted a regulation for the inclusion of a policy on ethics in a pension fund's statutory statement of investment principles. The draft is couched in general terms: "The statement must cover whether the trustees take into account any considerations, and, if so, what these are and how investment decisions are affected."

The first part should present little difficulty to most scheme trustees. All trustees must be in favour of the company in which they invest being run in their long-term interests, which short-term unethical behaviour will undermine.

If, however, trustees are being invited to take positions on arms manufacturers, tobacco companies or the other political pariahs, we may be forced into the absurd position of one ethical investor many years ago. When asked why it had only half its normal-sized investment in ICL, the response was "we are not investing in the explosives division".

It is well nigh impossible to draw a precise line between the ethical and the politically correct. Our view is that the next natural development of responsible stewardship is to push more actively for change in underperforming companies. Far too often, the institutions intervene when vast amounts of shareholder value have already been poured away. Our focus funds in the UK and US, and our alliance with CalPERS are intended to give more force to that initiative. After all, if not the investing institutions, who?

The second example of government exhortation is the drive to persuade investors to pour money into early stage and development capital in the UK. The fact is that the track

record of such investment in the past ten years is very poor.

The returns achieved have, according to the British Venture Capital Association's (BVCA) own statements, been less than conventional UK or overseas equities, or even bonds. The BVCA brings no credit to itself by quoting overall figures for private equity returns that are dominated by MBO funds, where financial leverage and a bull market in equities has convinced the managers of their own genius. These numbers have nothing at all to do with high-tech start-ups. The private equity fund managers are, naturally, supporting the perceived need: they will see the value of their own businesses escalate rapidly if they capture some of these investment flows.

It is not that I think early-stage and development capital investment is anathema to our clients. We have demonstrated many times that we are prepared to back specific technol-

ogy in companies we understand, but most of these developments have taken place within relatively mature companies with at least a notional quote. At the cutting edge of technology, in a single project company, we are unable to do effective due diligence into the technology; we do not have those specific skills, and nor do most institutional investors. Even most of the private equity fund managers claim that their great contribution is to add proper financial and management skills to a wonderful technology.

In my experience, a financial investor gains much more comfort from investing alongside a company that has direct knowledge of the relevant technology. The Wellcome Trust is the largest funding institution for medical research in the UK; would we be more likely to invest in a biotech investment as a partner with Wellcome than either by ourselves or via a private equity specialist? Absolutely.

It is the vehicle through which we make such investments that will determine our strategy in this area, not the jawbanging of government. As fiduciaries, we have a responsibility to invest wisely for our clients. We cannot respond eagerly to promoters who effectively ask us to "open your wallets and say after me 'help yourself'".

Partnerships with companies that want to take an exciting, but high-risk, new technology out of their direct profit and loss account; investing together with informed trade investors; investing with fund managers whose fee structure does not insulate them from the pain of failure, instead of, as now, exposing them only to the pleasure of success; these are what we will seek.

It is a little rich for a Government that has taken more than £100 million a year from our clients alone by removing tax credits, to ask us to tie up more of their money for longer periods at higher risk. If we had the cashflow that has been taken from us, we would be in a much better position to help.

Alastair Ross Goobey is chief executive of Hermes Pensions Management.

## Smoke screen

HERE is the paradox: you are an insurance firm that must, for commercial reasons, charge smokers more for life insurance because the statistics show that cigarettes shorten their lives. But you are owned by a company that makes fags and insists, against all the evidence, that smoking is a harmless pleasure.

I had wondered how the former insurance arm of BAT Industries, our biggest maker of coffin nails, squared this particular circle. Now Phil Hood-

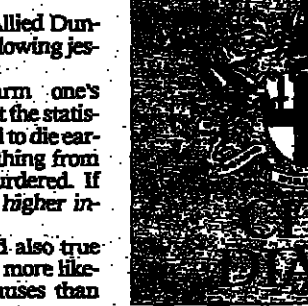
kinson, chief executive at Allied Dunbar has let me in on the following Jesuitical explanation.

Cigarettes do not harm one's health, so the spin goes. But the statistics show that smokers tend to die earlier of other causes — anything from car accidents to being murdered. If so, they must be charged higher insurance premiums.

Ingenious, is it not? And also true — smokers are statistically more likely to die early of other causes than non-smokers.

The reason, in case you had not guessed, is that they tend to come from lower down the social scale and/or to be on low incomes. Such people are, statistically, more likely to succumb to various causes of death than those further up the social ladder. Amazing what you can prove with statistics.

MOST brutal mugging of the English language this week is by Flavus, the French advertising sales agency, with the following: "The international realignment of several Procter & Gamble brands handled until now by EURO RSCG Worldwide affects essentially those accounts handled on the North American market by EURO RSCG Taiwan but in no way does it affect accounts held by Jor-



dan McGrath Case & Partners EURO RSCG nor Lilly McFarland & Panteloni EURO RSCG.

They really do talk like this, these marketing idiots. Does anyone have the faintest idea what they are trying to say?

### Swiss role

ADAIR TURNER'S powers of persuasion were stretched beyond breaking point on the tarmac at Heathrow Airport yesterday. The CBI Director-General was one of a party heading off to Zurich and thence to the Davos World Economic Forum when news came through that the airport there had been closed.

Unfortunately the aircraft was owned by SwissAir, a carrier not not-

ed for its charm and kindness towards paying customers, so the crew refused to let passengers off the flight. After a dreary two-hour wait, Turner was seconded to go forward to try to persuade them to let everyone return to the terminal. He did his best, and reported back: "I think the negotiations are coming to a conclusion."

To which the humourless stewardess responded: "Is that an example of your British sarcasm?"

AS YOU will have noticed, Lucacade has been given the product makeover with the help of spokesmen such as Daley Thompson and Alan Shearer. Now this winter's flu has meant a 25 per cent jump in sales.

Peter Harding at SmithKline Beecham admits this is not quite what the marketing geniuses had in mind. "We have been repositioning Lucacade from primarily a convalescence drink to primarily an energy drink," he babbles. "But if we sell more product, we're not disappointed."

### French leave

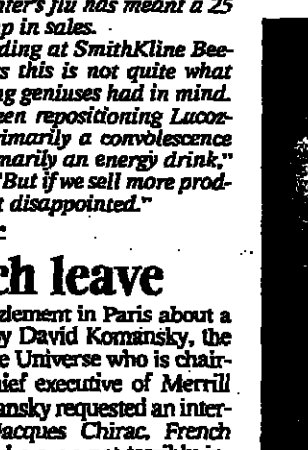
GREAT puzzlement in Paris about a flying visit by David Komansky, the Master of the Universe who is chairman and chief executive of Merrill Lynch. Komansky requested an interview with Jacques Chirac, French President and a man not terribly interested in the minutiae of international finance, everyone assumes.

The meeting was slated for half and hour and went on for twice that. Komansky left hatchet-faced and refused to say a thing. The Elysée put out some hogwash about how they discussed the regulation of world financial markets which no one could make much sense of.

But my man in Paris points out that Chirac is best friends with Boris Yeltsin, at least when the Russian premier can remember who anyone is. His support would be essential for EU backing for any bailout being put together by Wall Street. We shall see.

MARTIN WALLER

city diary@the-times.co.uk



David Komansky's brief Paris trip left most observers in the dark



William Ford is keenly aware of the family heritage

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[illegible]



Annie Turner introduces a three-page special report on an industry transformed by space-age technology and lower overheads

# Internet triggers data boom

The telecommunications industry is in a frenzy. Its traditional trade, telephone calls (including faxes) is growing at 6 per cent a year in the West. Such a rise would be enviable in many industries, yet it pales when compared with the estimated growth in data traffic, which consultants put at about 150 per cent a year in developed countries.

That figure comes from Deloitte Consulting. Most of this new traffic has been generated by the Internet, which consumers and many businesses access via the telephone network.

The biggest companies have a dedicated link. With these phenomenal rates of growth, it will not be long before data transmission surpasses vocal interchange as the dominant form of long-distance communication. It is already happening in Britain. Last November Bill Cockburn, the managing director of British Telecom, announced that more data is transmitted over BT's telephone network than voice calls.

Things have moved fast since then. Freeserve, a free Internet access service launched last September by the Dixons Group, the electrical retailer, now has 900,000 customers, making it the world's fastest-growing Internet service provider. Dixons reckons an average of 8,000 people join its service daily, 40 per cent of whom are

new to the Internet. Freeserve provides free Net access, electronic mail service, UK-based news and 15 megabytes of Web space per customer.

It makes money by receiving a small percentage of the cost of the local call necessary to connect the user to the Net, which varies between one and six pence per minute. Dixons claims to save consumers an average of £150 a year, compared with "traditional" Internet service providers, which typically charge a monthly fee.

The Dixons experience is illustrative of a change across the developed world. It is now widely accepted that telecoms underpin just about every other industry, so many countries are opening up their telecoms markets to competition after years of resistance. At the beginning of last year, most of the European Union member countries opened their telecom sectors to full competition, while much of Latin America and parts of Asia are doing the same.

New players are keen to enter liberalised markets because the combination of new technology and lower overheads means that they can compete with the incumbent operator, which was likely to have been part of the civil service, not a commercial organisation with shareholder pressures.

As Dixons has shown to great effect, in this new, multilayered market, there is a great opportunity for

non-telecoms companies to be successful service providers, leaving others to provide the infrastructure and administration.

A whole new breed of telecoms service providers has grown up to exploit new markets and the insatiable demand for more capacity, or bandwidth. Companies such as WorldCom, Carrier 1 and Level 3 recognised that by building their own inter-

**'People in the street are having a marvellous time. They are getting better services for less and less money'**

national networks, they could circumnavigate the accounting rate system — the way in which the former monopolies carved up revenue from international calls between them through a series of agreements.

The new generation is building infrastructure using cheaper, newer technologies that can provide huge amounts of bandwidth at a stroke.

Naturally, they install more capacity than they actually need and sell it on to other carriers who, elsewhere in the world, are probably their rivals.

This process has given rise to an industry that is complex in structure, increasingly works through arbitrage and has spawned many niche service opportunities, such as that grasped by Dixons. Analysts estimate that the Freeserve initiative has added £1 to the Dixons share price. That would make Freeserve worth £433 million if it were a separate company, according to the industry newspaper *Communications Week International*. Dixons hopes to make a great deal more money in the future from advertising and Net commerce. The UK market for Net retail sales could be as much as £2.8 billion by 2003.

With the promise of such riches, it is little wonder that all around the world, the telecoms sector has defied gravity. For example, the financial markets were in turmoil in October, when the first branch of the former Swiss monopoly's shares was sold, yet the shares were massively oversubscribed. Altogether, more than £24 billion was raised in telecoms and related stock on the world's stock markets in 1998.

WorldCom, the aggressive US-based company that surprised everyone by snatching MCI from BT's acquisitive jaws last year, has based its

entire business plan on the fact that it will keep growing at an amazing rate — and the financial sector has backed it to the hilt.

Marcus de Ferranti is the managing director and co-founder of Band-X, based in London. Two years ago, the company was the first in the world to offer bandwidth for sale on the open market, matching up prospective buyers and sellers for a flat fee. The service has become increasingly sophisticated so that it now operates like a quasi-stock market and has emulators in other advanced markets such as the US and Canada.

Mr de Ferranti says: "Rates on international routes are plummeting. Once a country liberalises its telecommunications, prices usually fall by a factor of ten in two years. Everyone thinks prices are going to hit rock bottom and stabilise, but they just keep going down and the speed of their fall is catching everyone out. At the moment, competition in the wholesale market is fierce and lots of people are selling below cost. I believe the bubble will burst within the next couple of years and that will drive a massive period of consolidation."

Mr de Ferranti adds: "Some people will lose money on the stock market, but the person in the street is having a marvellous time. They are the real beneficiaries, getting better and better services for less and less money."

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\*The World's Most Admired Companies, FORTUNE\* magazine, 29th October 1998.

**BT**



High hopes: an Iridium satellite is powered into space

## Iridium fights back in war of satellites

In November the first salvo was fired in the battle for supremacy in satellite mobile phones — but so far it has failed to set the world ablaze.

Iridium, the first into the marketplace, has launched 66 satellites into low Earth orbit (LEO) — 468 miles high. These transmit calls around the world and down to 12 Earth stations or "gateways", where they link with the terrestrial phone network. But technical problems, poor transmission quality, lack of handsets and criticisms about costs have dogged Iridium's early days.

Figures released last week show that there has been little take-up of subscriptions globally, and not a single handset has been sold in Britain. Satellite phones have, of course, been around for years. Briefcase-sized, they must be set up in advance and aimed at a satellite 21,240 miles above the Equator, so you are unable to call someone travelling around — you must wait until they call you. Because of the lower orbit, Iridium handsets need less power, are lighter and more portable. Made by Motorola and Kyocera, they look like mobile phones with bigger antennae, and cost around £2,200.

The system was intended to revolutionise communications for business travellers outside the conventional cellular network and to attract people working in less developed countries, users of commercial and leisure boats, long-distance trucks and aid organisations.

Signals travel more quickly to LEO satellites, reducing the delay that can make conversations so awkward.

Iridium has recruited conventional cellular service providers as "roaming partners" to make the links in cities — in the UK it is Orange. Iridium also offers worldwide paging services and a GSM-style short message service, and has promised e-mail and fax. But the firm has been heavily criticised for the complexity of its cost structure, in which it acts as a wholesaler, selling airtime to the gateway operators. It sells it to the service providers and roaming partners, who sell it at retail prices to the customer.

Andrew Tolpelt is a telecoms market analyst at Phillips Tariffa, which monitors telecom pricing. He says: "Service providers can set prices at what they feel the market justifies. It's a global system, so you can go to a service

provider in a cheaper region." Lance Stevens, the business development manager at Orange, cites as an example the cost of an Iridium call from the UK to America of £3 per minute and to China of £4.22. For those who are not already Orange customers, there are also connection and monthly subscription charges — as well as the cost of the phone. However, Orange is still testing the service and is not yet offering it to consumers. Multinational businesses are in a position to select the service provider which offers the best deal. Is this unfair to individuals?

Craig Bond, Iridium's vice-president of market development, says: "Each country has different taxes and import tariffs on handsets and papers — differences over which we have no control. Shopping around is inevitable."

Even then, the cost of going mobile by satellite is still considerable. Jonathan Morgan-Jones, a researcher with the Telecom Managers' Association, says: "Iridium has chosen a sensible model because it is flexible. You can use your current cellular service provider, and put your Subscriber Identification Module (SIM) card in an Iridium phone."

But the flipside is the cost — due to their need to recover their investment quickly.

Costs will be brought into focus this autumn when Globalstar, a consortium led by Loral Space & Communications, starts commercial service; and in 2000, ICO Global Co. launches a satellite phone service. As well as voice and paging services, Globalstar plans to offer fax, data transmission and position location services. ICO claims the highest data rates among its immediate competitors but is focusing on voice, fax and e-mail.

Like Iridium, both competitors are planning to sell wholesale time to service providers. Handsets are expected to cost £600 and airtime costs are estimated at £1 per minute by Globalstar and £1.20 by ICO.

Both companies are also targeting parts of the world with little or no telecoms infrastructure. ICO has struck a deal with the payphone manufacturer, Landis & Gyr to provide satellite phone booths.

Mike Johnson, global media director for ICO, says that developing world services will be subsidised by those for business travellers.

SUE SPENCELEY BURCH

future and w

Providers who seek a Net profit

52/10/1999



# A future of colour and whiz-bangs

The world's existing telecommunications network is coming to the end of its useful life, a notion that is hard to grasp in the light of its current use.

Last year, international phone calls amounted to about 90 billion minutes, up from 52 billion in 1997, according to the Geneva-based International Telecommunication Union. Yet by volume (as opposed to value) international calls account for only 2 per cent of the total number, the vast majority of which are local calls.

The existing network was built to carry phone calls — soon destined to become a small portion of the traffic generated by developed countries where data traffic is growing by as much as 150 per cent a year. This is because of the apparently inexorable rise of the Internet which has 100 million users, a number expected to double in the next 18 months.

This is causing capacity shortages on many routes, particularly transatlantic links, because at least 60 per cent of Internet traffic is still routed via America.

Marie Wold, the head of the European Telecommunications and Media Institute at Deloitte Consulting, points out that the next generation of mobile phones (which will be available from 2002 onwards) is being designed to deal with data as well as voice. She predicts: "By 2010 about 90 per cent of traffic on mobile networks will be data."

It is not just the volume that is creating problems, but the phone network's use of circuit switching which maintains a live, dedicated link between the parties during a telephone call.

This is a very inefficient use of network capacity, or bandwidth, especially when compared with data's use of packet-switched technology. Here data is chopped up into small packets, each of which is addressed to the recipient and sequentially numbered.

The packets are fired into

Tomorrow's digital and mobile phones will supply customers with voice, data and other services, says Annie Turner

the mesh of the network and might take different routes to reach their destinations, being reassembled in the right order at the far end using their sequence numbers. Packets can also be interleaved with those from other transmissions en route.

The technology used to "packetise" a voice, so that it is treated as just another type of data, is advancing in leaps and bounds. Still images and video, too, can be transmitted in this way, which means that many types of traffic can be treated in a uniform fashion, leveraging economies of scale for network operators and greatly simplifying network management.

The Internet appears both to have created the problem and provided a solution for it in the shape of Internet Protocol (IP). This is the transport mechanism which comprises rules to ensure the smooth running of the network, averting traffic jams and collisions on the Internet and on the new generation of networks.

And IP will not only rule on core networks. There is a host of new "access technologies" that will ensure that IP traffic flows right into people's homes — fixed wireless links might be employed or the existing copper cabling in the ground, but with whiz-bang electronics on the exchange and consumer ends of the line.

By whatever means it is delivered, IP will mean that consumers have digital links from end-to-end, but with far faster line speeds than are currently available with Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN).

Bob Brace, the marketing director with Nokia Telecommunications based at Heath-

row, says: "IP will be a tremendous unifying factor. We will end up with a single network connection into the home for games, multiple phone lines for different members of the family, video-on-demand, access to information and electronic mail."

"You will be able to download the latest CD — or just the parts of it you want — instead of having to go to the shop or listen to a Californian radio station online."

The American television channel NBC is already exploring new ways of delivering information in addition to broadcasting, Mr Brace says. "This includes cable television infrastructure and the Internet," he says. "Television as

we know it now will be steam-age technology in ten years."

Likewise advances in the core transmission network are dwarfing current fibre-optic capacities. A new technology known as Wave Division Multiplexing (WDM) splits up the light signal into colours, producing multiple different-length signals which can be transmitted simultaneously.

Originally, one fibre pair had the capacity to carry 32,000 voices at once. Two years ago Ciena, one of the pioneers of WDM, deployed a cable that could simultaneously support 16 different length signals or channels, which means it can carry the equivalent of 512,000 voice calls, according to Guy Powell, the managing director of Ciena for Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

He says: "Systems with 96 channels will shortly be deployed that will support almost three million calls at once. In data terms, that translates to one terabit [a million million bits]."



Using lasers to break white light into multiple colours allows a single fibre to carry a million-plus phone calls per second

## Providers who seek a Net profit

A new breed of business, the Internet service provider or ISP, has emerged from the rapid growth of Internet traffic. For a monthly subscription, providers such as Yahoo!, America Online, and Direct Connection will connect you to the Net and provide an e-mail address.

Connecting your computer to a modem allows you to transmit data on the phone line. When you log on to the ISP's host computer or server, you can send and receive messages, as well as access online information and surf the World Wide Web, for the price of a local phone call.

It sounds like a lot of investment for the ISP for very little return. But the profit area is electronic commerce: home banking or shopping over the Net. Being an ISP opens the door to business opportunities and new ISPs are starting up all the time. Tesco is offering an ISP service in expectation of a home-shopping revolution that could see a fleet of vans deliver groceries that have been ordered on the Web.

And the rock star David Bowie has set up an ISP, Alex Judd of Presco, a Net ad agency, says: "The man will do live chats. The site is sold on novelty value."

BT claims that the Net has a 6 per cent market penetration in the UK and that it is likely to rise greatly with the coming of digital TV when set-top boxes will be able to bring the Net into the home. More than 1.3 million households have access to the Net, making them online customers for the ISPs.

But Net opportunities are international and many of the big players — such as America Online, Excite Inc and CompuServe UK — originated in the US. Marie Wold of Deloitte Consulting says: "ISPs are doubling their business every five or six months throughout Europe and every three months in the US. We're seeing massive proliferation."

David Bowie will be doing live chats on the Web

there doesn't appear to be a slowdown."

The decision by Dixons to offer free Net access — which it can do through a deal with the telecommunications company Energis — is putting the pressure on other ISPs to offer more value. And with the growing revenues from online advertising and e-commerce, ISPs are able to offer some good deals.

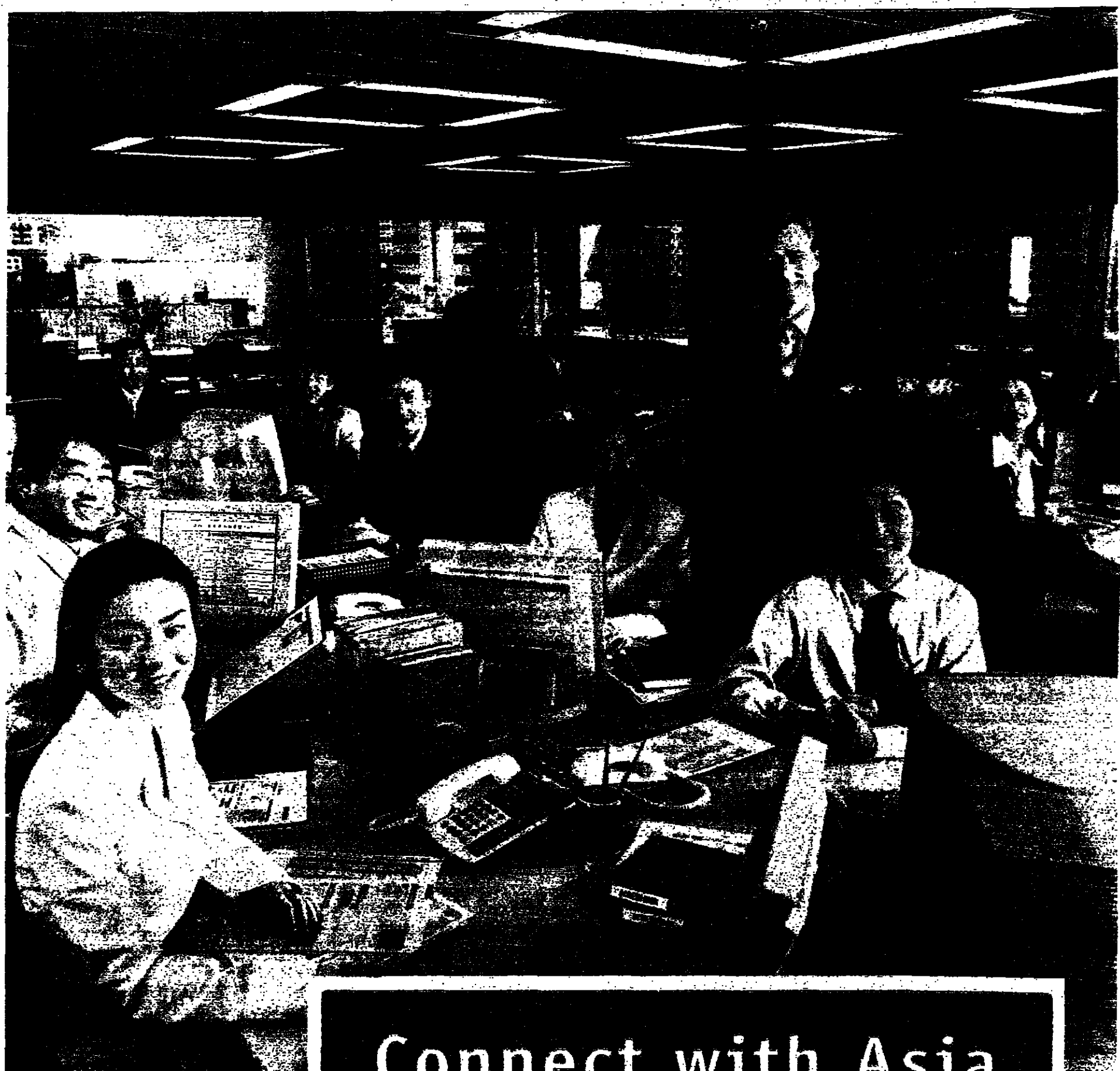
Virgin Net has gone for subsidised rather than free Net access. David Johnson, its commercial director, says: "We're evolving into something even more closely aligned to the Virgin brand and we are making the most of retail opportunities in areas of business that Virgin operates in." Subscribers can book their Virgin flights, buy CDs, or listen to Virgin radio and — through a tie-in with Citibank — enjoy free home banking and current accounts that pay interest.

The rapidly evolving ISPs are finding that to cash in on e-commerce, they need to build customer loyalty. ISPs are trying hard to differentiate themselves by offering useful services to customers — content such as news, music and sport, as well as chat communities and subscriber offers. Quality of service is a big issue, as anyone who has experienced the frustrations of connecting at times of peak demand can testify.

Presco's Mr Judd says: "Many ISPs are investing in more powerful infrastructure to ensure a faster service, better support and a better connection rate. What is termed the hassle factor comes into it — if you always get connected first time, you will remain loyal. Some ISPs are offering subscribers free Web space to set up their own site."

Each ISP can exploit a different niche market. Pipex, for example, offers an information service aimed at journalists. One of the biggest niche markets is education — eventually 30,000 UK schools will be linked to the National Grid for Learning.

STEPHEN HOARE



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## Dawn of a new age for Japan

The multimedia market is set to play a major part in the country's economy, says Ruth Taplin

THE subtlety and understatement of Japanese culture often makes it appear that little is happening in the country. However, in the telecommunications and IT sectors, change is occurring rapidly at all levels.

Digital TV broadcasting has brought multimedia into the mainstream of Japanese society, producing links between telecommunications, broadcasting and information services. The multimedia markets are restructuring and laying the groundwork for future growth. With high-speed, high-volume communications made possible by fibre optic networks, teleshopping, home communications, karaoke, Internet TV and digital versatile disk (DVD) are all being planned for the 21st century to support the economy in the future.

DVD, the latest in CD-Rom technology, has a huge storage capacity, able to provide up to 133 minutes of video playback time. The Japanese Ministry of Post and Telecommunications has predicted that 123 trillion yen will be spent by consumers on the multimedia market by 2010. Internet services are also becoming more established: the Multimedia Contents Association of Japan (MMCA) has found that Internet users total more than ten million. E-mail, personal computer communications and network shopping at virtual shopping centres are becoming more usual in Japan.

The restructuring of existing networks such as NTT and KDD and newly created networks such as International Digital Communications (IDC), Teleway Japan (TWJ) and Nippon Tsushin (IDO) and Japan Telecom are laying the foundations for new Internet-related businesses that involve electronic money and Internet telephones.

Competition in Japan is growing — exemplified by the fact that 123 Type 1 telecommunications businesses now exist in the country. Although NTT remains the largest company — dominating long-distance and local services with turnover of more than \$60 billion — its predominance is now being challenged.

KDD, once involved only in international calls, now offers a domestic phone service that can provide cheaper calls than NTT in categories exceeding 12 miles. Competition is forcing NTT and KDD to offer more attractive rates. The Toyota Motor Corpora-

tion (TMC) is a good example of how the deregulated new communications networks operate in Japan. TMC is the major equity shareholder in TWJ, IDC and IDO.

TWJ is involved in a number of services, such as the 0070 Freephone, a call connect service, VPN (Virtual Personal Exclusive Line Networks), Cell Relay Service and Teleway Sirius, an Internet service provider. Its sales are more than 110 billion yen.

IDC is involved in optic fibre cable-laying projects: IDC Home Dial, a credit card-based automatic dialling service from overseas to Japan; it started Internet International Gateway services; established IDO Solutions, a 100 per cent-owned subsidiary; and in March 1998 expanded its services to 208 locations. Its turnover is more than 70 billion yen. IDO has been involved in cellular phone and digital cellular phone services. Since March 1997 it has been collaborating with DD1 in the introduction of CDMA digital protocol cellular phone services. GSM, the traditional digital protocol technology, has not been readily available in Japan, so the spread of CDMA will need to be assessed.

IDO is a good example of how complex Japanese telecommunications are presenting many obstacles to Western companies. The extent of co-operation among rival Japanese communication networks is remarkable. In the PHS market, for example, most regions have three companies competing to provide improved services. Toyota, through its TWJ arm, is supporting the construction of a nationwide network by investing capital in Astel Tokyo and Astel Chubu. TWJ invests in Astel companies throughout Japan. The PHS has been one of the most popular mobile phones here. NTT, with its Personal Communications Network, is its main rival, along with DD1 Pocket Telephone.

It is difficult to see where the room exists for American or European companies. The problem for Japanese companies is that at home and abroad all their efforts are invested in Japanese-related activities. NTT, KDD and even Toyota are fulfilling the needs of Japanese companies and consumers for their telecommunications and multimedia services. The test will be whether they can successfully challenge Western companies, and become household names as they did with cameras, photocopiers and the like.

The test will be whether companies can successfully challenge Western rivals

The Finns and the Italians have gone mad for mobiles, says Tony Dawe

Two of the most disparate nationalities in Europe are rivaling each other in the race to top the league of mobile phone users.

The Finns, famous for being fair-skinned and taciturn, and the olive-skinned and gregarious Italians could become the most permanently switched-on peoples within a couple of years, according to research by Salomon merchant bank. It predicts that the two countries will be the first to have more mobile phones than people but for very different reasons.

"The Finns have taken to mobile phones because the population is spread across the country. They have also been offered some of the lowest tariffs in the world," says John Jensen, Salomon's wireless analyst. "The Italians have been attracted to them because of excellent prepayment deals."

The popularity of mobiles in Finland has undoubtedly prospered because Nokia, which has just overtaken Motorola as the world's leading manufacturer of mobiles, is a Finnish company. It generates, on its own, a third of Finland's annual economic growth; its shares account for half the trading on the Helsinki stock exchange and Jorma Ollila, Nokia's president, was recently voted the second most powerful person in the country in a nationwide poll.

The company has not, however, swamped the country with cheap "terminals", as it calls the phones. Finns pay £100 and more for a phone but the cost of calls is hardly any more expensive than using a fixed line. Finland currently tops the mobile phone "penetration league", with 56 portables for every 100 people, according to recent statistics from the ECM World Cellular Database.

The forecasts that the number of phones will outstrip the number of people is based on their popularity among children, with nearly all 16 to 24-year-olds possessing a mobile. About one in three schoolchildren possesses one. They are marketed aggressively at children, with parents happy to buy Citiphones, which work only within Helsinki's boundaries and cut off after a fixed amount, normally 100 marks (€12), has been spent on calls. Mobile phones were top of the pre-teens' Christmas gift



## Talking their way into the record books

third of the country's population.

The boom may be slowed by an increase in the cost of calling cellular phones from fixed lines earlier this month. The increase resulted from a "simplification" of tariffs ordered by Italy's telecoms watchdog, which seems to benefit only those already enjoying off-peak deals.

Mr Jensen insists, however, that the Italians, together with the Finns, will continue to snap up mobile phones. He says: "The explosion in the use of the Internet has resulted partly from more and more people getting e-mail addresses and those without them feeling left out. The same will happen with mobile phones. When people without one are regularly asked for their mobile number, they will soon acquire one. The cost of not being a cellular subscriber is going up, but the cost of being connected is coming down."

lists and dominated newspaper and television advertising for the festive period.

In a country famous for its love of vodka, the future of the mobile phone could also be guaranteed by the discovery of one that runs on alcohol. Researchers at Manhattan Scientific in the United States have developed a phone with a fuel cell that works by a chemical process and is recharged by in-

jecting a small alcohol-fuel that provides enough power for two weeks' use.

In Italy the popularity of mobiles is a new phenomenon, with the launch of pre-paid services by Telecom Italia Mobile, Omnitel and their recently licensed rival, Wind, an Italian, French and German consortium. Customers buy their handsets at market rather than subsidised prices and

pay for their calls in advance. "The pre-paid services were promoted very cleverly and the prices pitched just right to catch on," says Mr Jensen.

The schemes also benefited from the traditionally high tariffs charged for calls from fixed lines. The services have helped the market to grow by 80 per cent in the past year to total 18 million subscribers, more than a

## Capital ideas for inventors.

Venture capitalists are on the lookout for bright ideas

Without small and medium-size enterprises, or SMEs, there would be no large telecommunications companies. All global multinationals start out as small companies with a good idea, and even when they become large, they still rely on smaller and medium-size enterprises for cutting-edge ideas, Ruth Taplin writes.

The UK has no shortage of inventors, but it has had a shortage of visionary venture capital companies and late-pay legislation. The latter has been addressed by legislation concerning a Better Payment Practice Code pushed through by Barbara Roche, then Small Firms Minister, which demands that large firms pay interest at 8 per cent above base rate on overdue debts to small suppliers.

The other problem for high-tech companies is obtaining venture capital. This is especially difficult after the second or third phase of the project, when extra capital is needed for product update, a new sales effort and improved facilities.

Alex Henderson, managing director of Nairn Douglas, and past president of the Federation of Electronics Industry (FEI), notes signs of change for high-tech companies seeking venture capital. The FEI has run three successful investment forums at which innovators can present their cases for financial assistance to potential investors.

Individual and corporate investors are careful to assess whether market research has been done to prove that there is demand for a new technology and that the product or service constitutes a genuine breakthrough. Other pitfalls for innovators include inadequate business plans. Investors need to have a clear, convincing business plan before they are willing to commit funds.

Understanding who the investor is, whether individual or corporate, is essential for the high-tech company. Many investors have particular preferences or even geographical limits. Innovators need to familiarise themselves with the investors and their terms for offering money as well.

The different, but successful, approaches to corporate venturing show that both large institutional as well as

smaller, more individual companies can be effective in providing venture capital to the SME.

Celtic House Investment Corporation (CHIC) was founded by Terry Matthews, a Welsh-born entrepreneur who is the founder and chairman of Newbridge Network Corporation, a Canadian telecommunications company. Since its formation in 1987, Newbridge has increased its annual turnover to more than \$1 billion.

Mr Matthews set up CHIC in 1994 as his own private company to invest in high-growth start-up enterprises in the IT-telecom sector, with an emphasis on identifying technologies and businesses that are potentially complementary to Newbridge or that will give Newbridge exposure to a diversified range of emerging technologies.

This institutional approach has led to CHIC investing in almost 40 start-up companies. In some cases Newbridge has been a co-investor from the outset, such as with the Cambridge-based encryption company, nCipher.

In the Welsh convergence company Ubiquity it has become an investor at a later date. Over the past year or so investments by CHIC/Newbridge in just four of such start-ups have resulted in gains of nearly \$500 million to the two companies.

A more individual approach shows that passion or an emotional investment in the company that the venture capital company is supporting can be just as important as providing monetary assistance.

Richard Davidson, who works in a specialist technology team based in the City of London that assists early stage companies with their financing, agrees. He says: "We try to find investors who not only understand the technology but are passionate about it."

This means a small number of highly skilled venture firms in Europe, but very often it can also mean having

to take the companies across the water to investors in Silicon Valley, where the familiarity with these types of venture is more widespread. In some cases, we will make the investment ourselves."

One such example is Zeus Technology, a Cambridge-based webserver tools business.

Mr Davidson says: "Zeus is the pick of the early-stage technology companies in the UK, and such was our passion for its business that we decided to get involved individually. I would say that it is passion, coupled with a healthy cynicism, that should guide the investor."

But, in the final analysis, whether you are seeking capital for an SME IT high-tech venture, or providing capital and passion, proceed with caution.

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# Notions and potions sure to win hearts

The view — espoused by some women and men — that Valentine's Day is sentimental rubbish and should be ignored doesn't really wash. The irony is that it is the romantic slush factor that provides a welcome relief from the curmudgeonly attitudes we often engage in daily life.

So how do you plan to celebrate? By Word of Mouth (0181-571 9555), the London caterer, suggests a generous meal for two at home with ice cream and oysters, marinated salmon and heart-shaped passion-fruit panna cotta. First set the scene. "The your napkins with pale pink organza and cover the table in crushed velvet, do which you can scatter 'rosebuds' and 'jasmine'." says a spokesman for By Word of Mouth. "Put a vase of rose water and some floating candles in the centre and arrange night-lights in frosted glass around the room for a warm atmosphere."

If you want garlic bread on your Valentine's Day menu, you can now do so without fear of offending. Tesco has bread that has a new strain of garlic baked inside — it looks and tastes like normal garlic but without the lingering aroma. The post-prandial kiss will be all the better for it. A serving costs 39p.

If you prefer tea for two,

**Katherine Bergen offers gift ideas for everyone from the most romantic to the most forgetful**



Tea for two: sip Lady Grey from a special Twinings set

Twinings has new teas that feature heart-shaped plates and saucers covered in rosebuds and hearts. The £30 set comprises a teapot, five cups and saucers, a cake plate and a box of Twinings Lady Grey tea. (Twinings mail order 0171-353 3511).

When it comes to sentimental tosh, chocolates are the tastiest kind. Thorntons sells a large diet-busting heart-shaped box in romantic red for £20.

Penhaligon's (Freephone

0800-716 108) has invented a whole new perfume for Valentine's Day — Love Potion No 9. The ladies' eau de toilette is pink and has green top notes, rich floral middle notes and base notes of precious wood and amber. The men's version is a citrus, spice and wood combination and comes in an intriguing black bottle. Prices start at £15.

Lavenders Blue (01483 211339), the mail-order company, has a Valentine selection. A silver heart box is £4.50, a

heart soap dish that includes a hand-made soap is £8.50, a mother-of-pearl heart is £4.50 and a terracotta heart dish filled with lavender or rose pot-pourri £12.50.

A company called 800 Hampers (0707 280800; website: www.800Hampers.com) offers a huge range. The Standard Romantic costs £24.99, while the Deluxe Romantic is £69.99. They include Glencoe smoked salmon, champagne and chocolates.

If your loved one has been overdoing it, present him or her with a hand-made heart footstool. It is upholstered in gold damask with matching tassels, and has beech legs. It costs £99.95 from House of Bath (0870 60 750 21).

The same company sells a heart curio table to house all



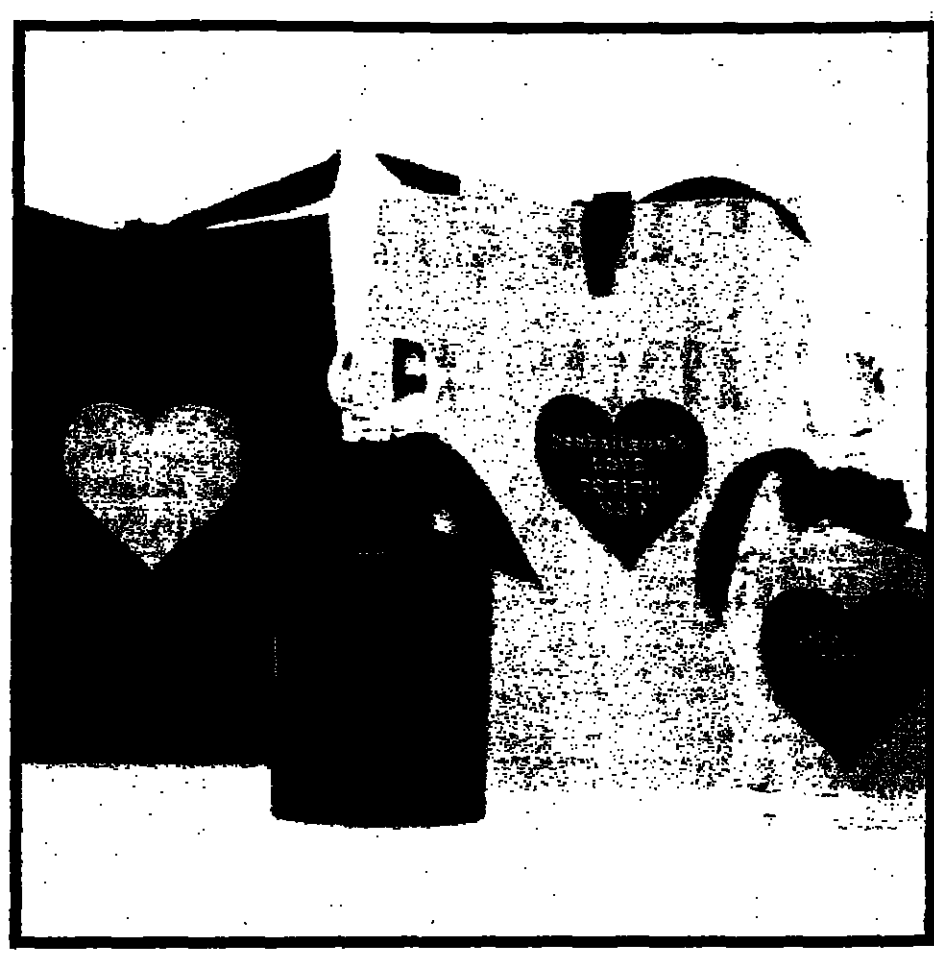
Thorntons' boxed choos

those romantic keepsakes for £89.95.

Care For The Wild International (01293-871 596), the wildlife charity, suggests adopting an orphaned animal as a long-lasting and meaningful gift. Having chosen an animal — elephant, rhino, chimpanzee, badger or tiger — the foster parent then receives an adoption certificate, a colour photograph of the orphan, a T-shirt, a factsheet, a video and a six-monthly update. Prices range from £14.95 to £49.95.

For another unconventional gesture, buy a property in Valentine Road, London E9. The estate agent Sovereign Park (0181-485 5800) has two properties there: a lower ground-floor garden flat for £69,995 and a three-bedroom maisonette with a roof terrace for £139,995.

Finally, if you are prone to forgetting dates such as Valentine's Day altogether, The Gift Delivery Company (01483 440893) has a free anniversary reminder service that goes with the gift delivery service, and is designed to ensure that busy people do not miss important anniversaries or special occasions. Customers register all the important dates by post, fax or over the Internet. Then, two weeks before the event, they are contacted and given a reminder and a list of goodies from which to choose.



Uncommon scents: Love Potion No 9, a new creation from Penhaligon's

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# Is it hot stuff or just another listings mag?

Has Emap Metro's new title got what it takes to succeed in a tough market? Tina Gaudoin reports

Just because something is not a new idea doesn't mean it's a bad one. Emap Metro's newest publication, *heat*, claims to be the "ultimate weekly entertainment fix". However, if you're an entertainment junkie or you have spent time in America, you will quickly spot the similarities between *heat* and the hugely successful American publication *Entertainment Weekly* (although *EW* doesn't contain TV listings).

The comparison does not please Mark Williamson, the publisher of *heat*, who hotly denies any suggestion of a link, saying: "This has been an idea in David Hepworth's mind for at least five years."

Granted, Hepworth, the editorial director whose triumphs include *Smash Hits*, *Just Seventeen*, *Q* and *More!*, is a publishing legend (at least in the magazine industry) and anything with his stamp stands more than an odds-on chance of succeeding. But, presented with the respective magazines, even my dog could sniff out the similarities.

According to Williamson: "We've spent lots of money and time designing *heat*. It has been a long time since *Entertainment Weekly* won any design awards." Ouch! Williamson and the *heat* team should be flattered, not defensive. *EW* broke the mould in the US and went on to make millions. There's no reason why *heat* shouldn't do the same. But

perhaps the *heat* team is asking itself the same question as everyone else about the launch of something dedicated to those who are, in Williamson's words, "mad for entertainment". Are there enough entertainment junkies out there to merit a weekly magazine? And, what's more, can the magazine do what *EW* does so well — deliver stories exclusively and first?

To say that Mark Frith, the editor of *heat*, is "bullish" about his magazine's chances would be an understatement. As a former magazine editor himself, it's hard not to overlook the carefully prepared pre-launch media soundbite (and why shouldn't he be prepared — this is a huge launch with a £4.5 million budget).

When I ask how *heat* will compete with the highly influential, huge-circulation week-end supplements, Frith's reply is textbook: "We are not in competition with anyone else. We are a one-stop shop for entertainment fans. We won't always be first, but we will always be best."

But the increasing "glossiness" of the Saturday and Sunday newspaper magazines, plus the advent of entertainment-based listing guides, such as *The Times*'s metro, the *Evening Standard*'s Hot Tickets and *The Guardian*'s The Guide, mean that the entertainment beat is more heavily populated than ever.

A weekly entertainment

magazine has the potential to break stories. Frith, the former editor of *Sky Magazine*, has surrounded himself with a crack team. Charles Gant, formerly of *The Face*, is one of Britain's best magazine film editors, and the news editor, Matt Smith, formerly at *NME*, should have great access to entertainment news stories. But do the British resemble the Americans in their "need" to consume infotainment on a vast scale? Do we really need to know the background to Leonardo Di Caprio's problems on the set of *The Beach*, for example? After all, most of us either read about it in the "red tops" or saw it on *News at Ten*.

*I* *heat* is to succeed it will need to do a lot better than tepid stories in the preview issue about why Cameron Diaz is the "most beautiful woman in the world": an "exclusive" on Ewan McGregor and Anna Friel in *Rogue Trader*, which is unaccompanied by a quote from either actor: a Q&A session with Christian Slater which asks "where did you go when you went out?"; or a sexist article on The Corrs, which wastes two paragraphs on Andrea Corr's backless outfit.

Not that there's anything wrong with any of these topics. I'm rather envious of Andrea Corr's figure myself. But I could get this stuff from any number of existing magazines.

If *heat*'s readership is to remain loyal, it needs to be offered something more, or at least different. But (as I know to my cost) it's easy to knock a launch. And *heat* is full of MTV-style pace and energy. I like its well-researched readable pages — even though my favourite readbite (that Salman Rushdie and U2 have pooled talents to come up with a shanty) was in *The Guardian*.



High hopes: *heat*'s launch is costing £4.5 million

an last week. The writing is humorous and sharp, although for a magazine that professes to be Brit-centric, there's a lot of American material.

To be fair, the preview issue is not the same product that will hit the newsstands next week. The launch issue promises, among other things, John-

ny and Kelly in a *Big Break* interview and a report on the Golden Globes — both should be good. If I were to find fault with *heat*, I would say that the design leaves me cold. Box layouts, packed pages and heavy black type smacks of mid-Nineties lad mags. Is it me or is everyone a bit suspicious of a magazine that uses exclamation marks in almost every headline?

But then again, I know better than to doubt the power of a mega-magazine empire will-

ing to put millions into focus-grouping, researching and promoting what we "really, really want". When *Red* (also an Emap Metro product) launched over a year ago it blew *Frank*, the magazine that I was editing, out of the water in terms of launch budget and advertising revenue alone.

Emap Metro has an untested history of understanding the mass market, but it

needs to have done its research exceptionally well to reach the 100,000 ABC figures it forecasts for the first year.

So, can it make it? The problem with launching a magazine in the UK is, as a New York editor friend so accurately observed: "You Brits have anything new with words and pictures in it." That comment alone makes it worthwhile hoping for *heat*'s success.

## THE TIMES VERDICT

### "The pace is hectic"

■ IT'S bright, it's confident, there is certainly plenty of information in it and it feels and looks like a monthly read, so there is a strong sense of value for money. *heat* certainly looks different from other British entertainment magazines; overall, the influence of *Q* can be detected, but there is a very American feel to the front half, with lots of red and black type and coloured panels.

It is difficult to discern who the target reader is — is it the secretary on her way to work or the hip young kid on the street? The tone is reflective, almost condescending, explaining who The Offspring are, for instance, when every music paper has done them recently, but the pace is hectic: the opening "news" section, with lots of stories and gossip, is frantic and would benefit from some stronger pointers to guide readers to specific areas.

The film reviews are entertaining and clearly laid out, but music, videos, books and games are too condensed to have any real authority and, oddly, there are no previews of upcoming tours or events, which adds to the feeling that there is nothing proactive going on.

At the back, the TV listings section offers little different from the myriad listings publications already on the market, although the comprehensive film previews are a good idea that should go down well with those too exhausted after reading the magazine to think about anything else.

JAYNE DOWLE, editor of metro

### "I find the idea enticing"

■ WE may already have more listings magazines than we need, but who doesn't have the urge to find something new and entertaining to read?

If *heat* can provide this, then the fact that it offers TV times as well should be considered a bonus.

I find the idea of a new magazine rammed with film, music, books, celebrities, gossip and reviews far more enticing than the predictable fare of most women's magazines, and I am sure it is not alone. *heat*'s throwaway lively feel makes it just the kind of thing I want to devour on the way home from work. The layout is pleasantly garish, and although the pages are almost too busy, they make good use of boxes, side-bars and strong pictures.

The massive weakness, however, is the quality of the writing. Many of the features are shallow and unsophisticated in tone. If *heat* is to attract its target audience of 18 to 40-year-olds it must remember that these readers may have a couple of broadsheets and *The Economist* in their bag as well. *heat* is obviously not aiming to be highbrow, but it feels no more grown-up than *Smash Hits*.

BRIDGET HARRISON, assistant features editor

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## media times

## Where does Mirror Group go now?

The problems of Mirror Group Newspapers have not ended with the departure of its chief executive, David Montgomery. Instead, they are just beginning. Montgomery was, ultimately, condemned for not coming up with a coherent strategy for the future of the group that publishes everything from *The Mirror* and *Sunday Mirror* to the *Sunday People* and *Scottish Daily Record*.

Now the chairman, Sir Victor Blank, and other long-serving MGN executives, most of whom were there throughout the Montgomery era, have presumably got to come up with a new strategy. It cannot simply be the obvious one of selling themselves to the highest bidder, or maximising shareholder value, as they put it in the trade. The only clearly identified bidder, the regional newspaper groups Trinity and Regional Independent Media, would face a Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation, which could last six months, with no guarantee of success.

So Sir Victor and friends must

devise a plan for independent survival even if they think MGN is too small to compete in a world of international multimedia giants. And they will probably have to do it under fire — not just from potential bidders, but also from the competition, who will try to exploit the instability with every weapon at their disposal. There has already been a skirmish this week in the Central Television area in the Midlands, with *The Mirror* cutting its cover price to 20p and *The Sun* instantly replying with a 15p offer.

Part of Montgomery's strategy was spot-on — the move to become less dependent on the difficult mass-market national newspaper market by buying into the regional press with the acquisition of Midland Independent Newspapers. The *Newsletter* in Belfast and the *Derry Journal* Group were useful

additions. The will-they-won't-they parane over whether *The Sporting Life* should be relaunched as a general sports daily has been a fiasco and should be resolved as soon as possible. The weight of argument has always backed the view that such a thing will be difficult to pull off in the UK.

The most obvious failure, chronicled mercilessly in the new book by Chris Horrie and Adam Nathan, *Live TV: Tellybrats and Topless Darts*, has been MGN's rather sad attempt to get into television. Its last chance to do anything significant was the aborted bid for Channel 5. The 20 per cent stake in Scottish Media Group has become a valuable investment. It can never



Raymond Snoddy

be anything else because of monopoly problems in Scotland and legislation barring News International, the owner of *The Times*, and MGN from owning more than 20 per cent of mainstream broadcast media because of the size of their national newspaper circulations.

Although the cable channel Live TV became famous thanks to Kelvin MacKenzie and the *News Bunnies* — the latter, apparently, has retired — it could never amount to much. There are hopes that Mir-

ror Television will break even later this year but any notion that this is a way into the television market, other than at the margins, is misconceived. More local and regional newspapers, plus magazines and stakes in commercial radio, might be more appropriate targets.

The picture has been a little brighter for the core business, the national newspapers, with *The Mirror* increasing its circulation by nearly 14,000, or 0.6 per cent, to 2,338,049 in the six months to December, which goes against the trend. But the *Sunday Mirror* lost 12.6 per cent, or 287,510 copies, and *The People*, down 9.4 per cent (177,844), was not far behind. Even in Scotland circulations are

looking "soft". Exclude sales in England and abroad, and the *Daily Record* looks as if it is finding it difficult to stay the right side of 600,000 sales in Scotland. Rivals are surprised by the paper's healthy overseas sales of more than 31,000, mostly in Spain. *The Record* seems to have uncovered a hoard of Scots in Spain, marooned after the annual summer migration and unable to return home," says a rival stoffily.

A year ago the *Record* sold 3,324 copies abroad before it began printing in Spain last July. The remarkable thing is not that Spanish sales have soared but that they seem to be as high in December as at the height of summer.

Such number games indicate just how tough it is out there in the circulation wars. Even if MGN is rescued by Trinity or RIM and the

deal gets through the MMC, the problems won't be all over. Neither group has any experience of running popular national newspapers. Trinity appears to think that this could be done mainly from its current headquarters, in Chester. Even with the best will in the world, it is easy to foresee a future in which either group would become increasingly exasperated with the national newspaper business, particularly if some of the best staff left.

How attractive it might seem, after a year or two, to get rid of such an appalling burden and wipe out a pile of debt at the same time. Then it could be a case of "step forward newspaper proprietor Kelvin MacKenzie", with his pockets stuffed with venture capital gold.

His hands are full at the moment with Talk Radio, but MacKenzie is already talking about returning to newspapers one day.

He, of course, would have to be the one handing out the "bollockings" — he has had quite enough of being on the receiving end.

## The other Monty

Not everybody hated the Mirror chief, says Richard Holledge

Any heaven it was to be a journalist with the *Daily Mirror* in the early Nineties. Executives, staff and cronies spent happy hours emptying their office wine cabinets and enjoyed the congenial confines of Vagabonds, a club next to the office.

And as journalists slipped the circulation slipped.

Scores of casual workers did the work of some of the staff. Well, someone had to in order to preserve so civilised an existence. It was fun. A sort of cheerful anarchy where expenses were fiddled merrily, chums given shifts and girlfriends paid handsomely for freelance work. One illustrator was paid £80,000 in a single year by the senior executive with whom she lived.

This was 12 months after Robert Maxwell had taken his inopportune paddle. In late 1991, and the fun was about to end. Enter a figure who could hardly have been in greater contrast to the corpulent crook — the slim, nervy, Presbyterian figure of David Montgomery.

For him the drink, the profligacy, the extravagant man-power was almost as corrupt as Maxwell's raid on the pension fund. Furthermore, the culture of the place was at odds with the post-Eighties, go-getting aspirational quality so admired and exploited by Montgomery when he edited the now defunct *Today* newspaper. For him the Mirror Group

1992 was to be the scene of Fleet Street's last hurrah. He scrapped the remaining wine cabinets, closed the executive-only canteen and opened the senior staff lift to the workers.

Then he moved with such ferocity that people were left feeling that Maxwell hadn't been such a bad old villain after all. Editors were propelled to the door with unnatural haste: exit the *Daily Mirror*'s Richard Stott, bye bye Bill Hagerty of *The People*, farewell to such luminaries as Alastair Campbell, Anne Robinson and Paul Foot. One hundred casuals were sacked, and some staff found themselves in the invidious position of having to do some work.

Actually, rather a lot of it. As the size of the staff decreased the number of pages rose. There were new sections, pull-outs and inserts.

From the point of view of the City, the cost-cutting was clearly popular. From the journalistic point of view, bigger papers should have meant better. Simultaneous attempts to appeal to younger, professional people were probably correct. Swindon Woman — smart, relatively sophisticated and aspirational — replaced Andy Capp as the role model.

It might have worked if the editors had been up to it. It took Monty about 30 seconds to realise that his appointment of the amiable David Banks was a mistake, and as Banks spent more and more time at



David Montgomery left many enemies in his wake, but journalists who knew him as Editor of *Today* remember his strong leadership and capacity for hard work

lunch with his admiring hangers-on — rather redolent of the good old, bad old days — he probably realised that he was in the wrong job as well.

The swiftness of the sackings and the undoubted fact that the new Mirror wasn't much better than the old one earned Montgomery a shower of opprobrium from within the trade, led by Roy Greenslade of *The Guardian*, who had been a disappointing Editor of the *Daily Mirror* during the later Maxwell years. Everybody hated Monty. Or did they?

Many of the people who

worked with him on *Today* became admirers. Women profited from his patronage — Tessa Hilton went on to edit the *Sunday Mirror*, and deputise at *The Express*. Amanda Platell was later executive editor of *The Express* on Sunday; Juliet Ashworth is editor-in-chief of Australian *Vogue*; Jane Moore is a columnist on *The Sun*; and Sandra Parsons is features editor of this newspaper.

A Christmas card was produced to celebrate the advance of Montgomery's women staff, with them all in late-Eighties power-suited red (a spoof

which Monty enjoyed hugely). He is more comfortable with women than men because, as a female contemporary put it: "He is actually extremely shy."

There are many journalists who have fond memories of the man, impressed by his leadership at *Today*, where he worked harder than most, was absolutely focused and brought out the best in staff. It must be said though that supporters are in the minority.

Ian Hargreaves, who was the best of the flurry of Editors at *The Independent* during the Mirror/O'Reilly co-ownership, was outspoken in his con-

tempt. The staff of *The Independent* found Montgomery a useful focus for their frustration as the glory days of 400,000 circulation faded, costs rose and closure seemed imminent. Montgomery, with O'Reilly's backing, did little to win their sympathy, cutting staff and cutting again.

There was also a distinct manpower problem on the tabloids. In one astonishing spell on the *Sunday Mirror*, there were four editors in as many months. Or was it five?

By the beginning of 1998, there was increasing boardroom irritation with the chief

executive. Some directors were disturbed that the Mirror Group had a bad public image, others felt that Montgomery was somehow not the corporate man they wanted him to be.

But then he was never likely to be. He is a maverick, impatient with people who don't share his convictions, reluctant to be the team player.

Right from his arrival in Fleet Street in the Seventies, he drove determinedly onward. He was impervious to the fury of his peers when he was plucked from obscurity by Nick Lloyd (later Editor of *The*

*Express*) to become a senior executive on *The People* and then to replace him as Editor of the *News of the World*. He was equally impervious to the hatred — it's not too strong a word — he inspired when he finally reached the top.

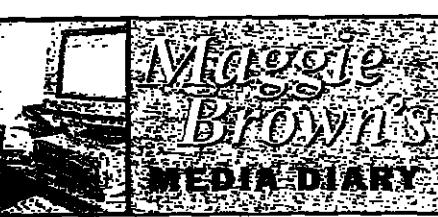
People who remember him as the callow, hungry young man of his trainee days remember him for three things: ambition, ambition, ambition.

● The author was night editor of *Today* in 1988-89, features editor of the *Daily Mirror*, 1992-95, and night editor of *The Independent*, 1996.

## News at 5, 6 or 7?

IN A hugely sensitive move, Channel 5 wants to pitch Kirsty Young into the early evening news battle. It is seeking permission to move its much-feted but virtually unwatched Channel 5 News from 7pm to either 6pm, where Young would cheekily challenge the re-launched BBC Six O'Clock News, or even 5.40pm, if the Independent Television Commission regulator agrees. It would then offer audiences a replacement for ITN's popular early evening news, which ends on March 8, to make way for Trevor McDonald's new 6.30pm *Evening News*...

Channel 5's news was first broadcast successfully at 8.30pm, but its shift last year to 7pm — alongside Channel 4 News — has been a disaster, with nightly audiences dwindling to 500,000. BBC1 must be watching nervously: the governors see it as essential to get the Six O'Clock News right. Kirsty Young was heavily wooed for the programme last year, but the BBC finally plumped for the personable but unknown face of Huw Edwards to carry the show... and so many expectations and careers.



■ I HEAR that *The Guardian*'s fearless TV fraud-busters, Michael Sean Gillard and Laurie Flynn, having brought a £2 million fine down on Carlton over the fake documentary *The Connection*, are now investigating two Channel 4 documentaries. This may explain why the easy relationship that developed last year between *The Guardian* and Channel 4 seems to be cooling a bit. I am also told that Clive Jones, the managing director of Carlton (and Fern Britton's estranged husband) received consoling phone calls from the top of the BBC along the lines of "there but for the grace of God..."

■ NEITHER David Elstein nor Dawn Airey, the top two Channel 5 executives, was available to debate on the *Today* programme yesterday with Lady Howe of Aberavon over the Broadcasting Standards Commission's attack on CS's late-night sex programming.

The clear hope is that the BSC's rebuke — Lady Howe's last stand as chairman before

she steps down — will hasten the death of the watchdog organisation, which this week raised eyebrows again by describing a scene in *The Bill* in which a male rape victim was interviewed as "too emotional". But the Independent Television Commission — a regulator with teeth — is also due to censure Channel 5 next week over specific programmes on the sex trade from *Sex & Shopping*, because of their portrayal of prostitution in a "moral-free zone". This apparently breaks the duty on broadcasters to be impartial.

Carlton Television is also in hot water over its 9pm drama series *The Vice*. Last week's opening shots of a young boy in bondage/sexual torture gear, screened just after 9pm and repeated this week in a résumé, has shocked even hardened drama executives (one of them kindly sent the *Diary* a tape).

The programme seemed to ignore all previous ITC advice about making gradual shifts after 9pm rather than plunging down a "waterfall".

■ LAST week's *Diary* revelation that eight leading economists had been paid between £5,000 and £10,000 by the BBC



Channel 5's sexy programmes have landed it in hot water

to write chapters in the *Public Purpose* in *Broadcasting* book, basically supporting the licence fee, was not the whole truth — in some cases payment was at least £15,000. Throw in the costs of publishing and promotion and the BBC must have spent more than £100,000 on this ruse to defuse criticism — sorry, aid contributions to the debate.

■ THREE weeks ago I pointed out that the BBC, supposedly

so accountable to its audiences, had failed to transmit a single *Points of View* since last August, despite viewers continuing faithfully to send in their letters of complaint. A week later I was told that it was returning, in a different form, after Easter.

Now BBC1 has been ordered to rush the programme back next month, format intact — which leaves producers scrambling to see if Carol Vorderman can make it. A pleasing victory.

## Jackson stays put

Michael Jackson, the chief executive of Channel 4 and one of the leading potential candidates to be the next Director-General of the BBC, has totally ruled himself out of the running for the job.

It was always unlikely that Jackson, a former Controller of BBC2 and head of BBC Broadcast, would apply directly for the Director-General's job only 18 months after taking control of Channel 4. But, in the television industry, it was thought that it might be a different matter if Jackson received a summons from Sir Christopher Bland, the BBC Chairman.

In an interview with Sky News's *Media Monthly* programme, which will be shown on Sunday, the Channel 4 chief executive unambiguously rules himself out for the BBC position.

"I think I have made it perfectly clear, both in public and internally within the channel, that I am committed to staying at Channel 4," says Jackson, who has already managed to snatch Test cricket from the BBC since his move to Channel 4.

Asked if he would accept a summons to the BBC, even if he did not actually apply for the job, Jackson simply replied: "I think I've made it perfectly clear that I want to stay at Channel 4 and I won't be accepting a summons to the BBC."

In the interview on Sky News, Jackson also criticises the Broadcasting Standards Commission (BSC), which attacked Channel 5 this week for showing explicit sexual content. Two years ago the BSC demanded that Channel 4 broadcast an apology for transmitting Ken Loach's film *Ladybird*, even though it was quite acceptable to the Independent Television Commission. The Channel 4 chief executive believes that it is now time to have a single regulator of broadcasting content so that programme-makers know where they stand.

The fact that Jackson is ruling himself out must shorten the odds on Greg Dyke, the former chief executive of London Weekend Television and chairman of Pearson Television, who also happens to be a close friend of Sir Christopher.

The other main external candidates for the top job in British broadcasting are David Elstein, the chief executive of Channel 5, who is mistrusted at the BBC because of his opposition to the licence fee, and Richard Eyre, the chief executive of ITV, who does not have any programme-making experience.

Meanwhile, Sky News is drawing up plans to launch its own *News at Ten* — although the exact name has not been decided yet — to coincide with the demise of the ITV news programme.

The 24-hour Sky News, part of BSkyB, an associate company of News International which owns *The Times*, is planning to create a flagship news bulletin at 10pm to try to take advantage of the news gap. The last *News at Ten* bulletin will be broadcast on March 5. After that the main ITV news programmes will be at 6.30pm and 11pm.

The man planning the new programme, which could attract additional resources, is Nick Pollard, the head of Sky News. He is a former Editor and executive producer of ITN's *News at Ten*. The preparations for a flagship news show at 10pm come as Sky News begins celebrating its tenth anniversary — it first went to air on February 5, 1989.

RAYMOND SNODDY



# Mellor's mediafest

The former MP is happy to be away from politics, says Raymond Snoddy

**T**ry to get into David Mellor's early 19th-century Docklands house overlooking the Thames on a Thursday morning and you may have to wait. The former Cabinet minister is dictating his handwritten copy for his weekly column on football for London's *Evening Standard*.

"Do you think I should learn to type?" asks the former National Heritage Secretary. Six years after his political downfall, Mellor finds that there are not enough hours in the day to meet all his media obligations, not to mention consultancy for more than a dozen companies.

Apart from filling a page of the *Standard* with trenchant thoughts on everything from referees to TV rights, his print outlets include a column for the *Sunday People* — ironically the paper that exposed his relationship with the actress Antonia de Sanchez — and columns for *Gramophone* and *Classic FM Magazine*.

His broadcasting interests are even more extensive. In addition to regular contributions to *CD Review* on Radio 3, the former Conservative MP for Putney presents 12 programmes a year in the *Vintage Years* series, in which he talks to a contemporary musician.

Then there is *Across the Threshold*, the Classic FM series that introduces listeners to a wider range of classical music, and *Six-O-Six*, his two-hour Saturday football phone-in on Radio 5 Live, which celebrates its sixth anniversary this month.

Charlie Whelan, the former Treasury spin-doctor, used his famous mobile phone earlier this

month to call the programme to discuss his beloved *Spurs*. The more senior spin-doctor, Downing Street's Alastair Campbell, also called Mellor on *Six-O-Six* to celebrate when his team, Burnley, miraculously scored seven recently. "I cannot tell you how pleasurable it is to drink from so many fountains," says Mellor, a Chelsea supporter. "How many people have the chance to be in the Cabinet and host a football chat show? I'm not saying that this is a career anyone else would want but I still get a kick out of it — and occasionally get a kick from it."

As soon as his ministerial career came to an end the telephone started ringing. The second call offered a six-week trial in the football radio hot-seat vacated by Danny Baker, who had gone off to "better himself in the world of tele-

vision". Some friends suggested, rather sniffily, that talking about football was not the sort of thing Mellor should do. "I took the view that there was nothing demeaning about talking about football to an audience in the same way I would in a bar after a game," says Mellor. What would have been demeaning, he believes, is if he had become a political lobbyist, "tugging at ministers' arms in the lobby".

At first, Mellor says, radio was petrifying, much worse than appearing at the dispatch box in the Commons. Terry Wogan suggested that there was no point in trying to prepare — he would be able to do it or he wouldn't. "But I've never been afraid of the microphone and I've always thought that one of the secrets is to talk in a relaxed



Newspapers and radio offered an outlet for the energies of David Mellor after his fall from grace

way to people as if the microphone was not there," says Mellor. Apart from obvious topics such as the performances of individual teams and officials, the programme has dealt with everything from the cost of going to football to how fans are treated abroad.

"How Manchester United fans were treated in Istanbul by Turkish police was first exposed on our programme," says Mellor, who gets a total of 750,000 people listening to some part of his programme.

His interest in soccer led Tony Banks, the Sports Minister and fellow Chelsea fan, to ask him to chair the Task Force into football. It has produced reports on racism in football, on access for the disabled and most recently on trying to encourage football's "grass roots". There have been rows too. Gordon Tay-

lor, of the Professional Footballers' Association, has accused Mellor of using the office "as an extension of his populist rabble-rousing political career". Mellor has accused Taylor of being one of the highest-paid trade union officials — presiding over idle and overpaid members.

He also feels strongly about the Office of Fair Trading case, now before the Restrictive Practices Court, which accuses the Premier League of behaving like a cartel in its TV rights deals with BSkyB — an associate company of News International, which owns *The Times* — and the BBC. Mellor, who will give evidence for the Premier League, will tell the court that 38 per cent of Leicester City's income of £6.5 million comes from the TV deal.

"Who is going to pay £6.5 million to show Leicester games?" he asks. Mellor, 49, is grateful to the media for taking him in when he was "forced to find other outlets for my energies", and says he has no bitterness about what happened to him, apart from one thing — he is still angry that *The Sun* published what he claims to be a "total invention" — that he conducted his relationship with de Sanchez in a Chelsea strip.

Although he still describes himself as a Tory, it is far from clear whether he will stand for Parliament again. "I haven't ruled out politics but I couldn't go back as some foaming-at-the-mouth partisan," says Mellor. "I would have to go back feeling that they wanted mature people with mature opinions who believed in putting their arms around people a bit."

## PR caught in the undertow

THE PR agency Financial Dynamics has become a victim of this week's bust-up at Mirror Group and the resignation of David Montgomery, the chief executive. PR Week reports that the agency is to be replaced by Finsbury, whose brief will be "turning around recent negative press reports about boardroom struggles". Finsbury's clients include Great Universal Stores, whose deputy chairman Sir Victor Blank is chairman of Mirror Group. PR Week looks at how the current flurry of mergers and takeover bids has created lucrative opportunities for financial PR agencies, but the fate of Financial Dynamics highlights the importance of being on the winning side.

■ **ITV HAS** secured a 43.3 per cent share of peak viewing in the first three weeks of the year, Broadcast reports. This is well above last year's 37.9 per cent and the 39 per cent target for the year set by Richard Eyre, the chief executive. Eyre told advertisers and agencies that he was confident that the move of *News at Ten* would make the schedule even more competitive.

■ **THE** cider brand Scrumpy Jack is investing £5 million in sponsoring this year's cricket World Cup and the English Test team. Marketing reports. It switched to cricket from sponsoring rugby because of what Paul Butler, the marketing manager, calls "the synergy with one of England's most treasured pastimes and Scrumpy Jack, a classic English product". The deal means cider will become the Test team's official alcoholic drink.

■ **CHANGING FACES**, who's going where? Jane Drabble steps down as director of education at BBC Broad-

cast and Production. Peter Grimsdale, commissioning editor at Channel 4, is to head factual programming for the BBC's independent commissioning group. Derrick Thomson, the acting controller of Grampian TV, becomes controller (Broadcast).

John Sopel, BBC political correspondent, is to become chief political correspondent for BBC News 24, replacing Huw Edwards, who goes to BBC's *Six O'Clock News* (Press Gazette). Jane Bevan, head of PR at the Natural History Museum, will set up her own agency, Debbie Flynn, managing director of the travel-specialist firm Brighter PR, has bought the company from Ansdell.

## TRADE

Group (PR Week). Tom Knox and Richard Warren will become joint managing directors of Delaney Fletcher Boffell in place of Mark Lund, who remains chief executive (Campaign).

Vijay Solanki, innovations manager for Bisto Foods, is to be head of marketing at Capital FM (Marketing). Ian Blackie, of Body Shop, is to be head of marketing for Carphone Warehouse, replacing Ruth Greenwood, who moves to Redwood Publishing (Marketing Week).

■ **MOVING HOUSE**, who's pitching for what? Ben and Jerry's ice-cream seeks agency to handle £500,000 UK launch. ParcelForce Worldwide's £4 million account goes to Ammirati Puris Littas (Marketing). Del Monte is reviewing its media account to prepare for big marketing push (Media Week). Yorkshire Building Society hires Ludgate public affairs to help campaign against demutualisation (PR Week).

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# The unique power of a picture

The 1998 Picture Editors' Awards show that a whole story can be told in a moment

Study the main picture to the right and you instantly understand what the fuss over the Stephen Lawrence murder inquiry was all about. It was taken by the Reuters photographer Paul Hackett last year as the chief suspects emerged from the inquiry. As they reacted to the anger of the crowd, Hackett's photograph demonstrated what sort of men they were.

Were they innocent or guilty? Seeing this superb photograph, showing the hatred and defiance on their faces, the spilling for a fight and the raised fists, most will know what their verdict would be. It was a photograph that confirmed or changed perceptions and which was deservedly judged news picture of the year in the 1998 Picture Editors' Awards sponsored by Kodak and Fujifilm.

Journalism is a hard game demanding quick and ruthless editorial deci-

sions, especially during a World Cup. The irony of the award to Hackett's picture is that it made most front pages for the first edition, only to be swept aside for the "shame" of David Beckham after he committed his foul against Argentina's Diego Simeone and was sent off.

The annual awards evening allows newspaper picture editors a rare opportunity to swap gossip. There were two main themes over the drinks at Guildhall in the City of London. One was digital photography which is now arriving almost universally as was evident in the 6,000 entries from 600 photographers.

"We are seeing the end of film as we have known it, especially with the arrival of the second generation of digital cameras," says *The Mirror's* picture editor Ron Morgans, an early pioneer as the first picture editor of *Today*.

Only recently, picture editors did not get photographs of football matches until at least half-time. Now, using digital cameras, David Viggers, the Reuters picture editor, starts transmitting 11 minutes after kick-off, a crucial saving of time for editors with first edition deadlines of 8pm or 9pm.

Digital adds speed in other ways. Last week Sam Kiley, Africa correspondent of *The Times*, took his own pictures from the war zone in Sierra Leone and sent them back to London almost instantly by using his laptop and a satellite telephone.

Photographers who once had to carry scanners and developing tanks now routinely transmit pictures back to the office from their cars—all they need to do is put the disk into their laptops, connect to their mobile phones and the pictures are on their way.

The other main theme was the slump in the number of entries for royal photography of the year, mainly because of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, and the limitations on pictures of Prince



Spoiling for a fight: the news picture of 1998 taken by Paul Hackett, a Reuters photographer, of the chief suspects in the Stephen Lawrence murder inquiry

William and Prince Harry, although *The Sun's* picture editor Geoff Webster notes that the Prince of Wales is now making more use of photo opportunities. One reason *The Times's* Marc Aspland won this year's award was that he captured an unusual moment of un-

ever, that when a jockey fell off his horse he captured a rarely seen fit of giggles.

Black and white photography may now be out of fashion but as Tom Stoddart's haunting picture from Sudan (using a Leica M6) demonstrates, it still tells a dramatic story. Stoddart, a Fleet Street veteran, now works for the Independent. Photographers' Group and lives by his wits. He sent himself to Sudan and worked with Médecins sans Frontières.

The portfolio that won him the black and white award was used in *The Guardian* and on nine pages of *Stern*, ten of *Le Figaro* and five of *US News and World Report*. Within eight hours of publication in *The Guardian*, there were 1,200 calls and £40,000 was raised. As Stoddart says, still images retain their power to move. "Old-fashioned" photo-journalism still works. It is an old lesson that new editors should not forget.



Haunting image: Tom Stoddart's award-winning picture of famine in Sudan



Kare Aspland's winning shot

**Brian MacArthur**

organised spontaneity. Aspland, a sports photographer, had never photographed a royal before and was not at all pleased when he was ordered to join the ratpack at Cheltenham, races. He was, at the back of the crowd, had to use a long lens and could only see Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's face. That meant, how-

## For hacks and cats only

THE great fragmentation of media over the past two decades has left journalists with many more column inches and broadcast minutes to fill. There is no more real news, of course, which explains this week's astonishing coverage of the new Whiskas ad.

Wednesday's lunchtime television news, *Jews at Ten*, a full page in the *Evening Standard*, endless radio talk shows, yesterday's national — you have to hand it to Whiskas's ad agency, M&C Saatchi and the Mars PR machine.

In case you missed it, the Whiskas commercial was spun as the first ad aimed at cats. Apparently, Mars brought in cat behavioural experts to determine what gets cats excited, and decided it would forgo targeting owners in favour of their pets.

Marice Saatchi's new agency then devised a charming campaign: a tearful cat in the break asks cat owners to ensure that their pets are watching. There follows a procession of fish, mouse and bird shapes, and shots of a ball of string — anything that ever got a cat excited. Apparently, cats will go bananas.

Brian's news editors certainly have. It is bizarre that journalists, notoriously reluctant to help or even to fraternise with the advertising sales people working for their own organisations, are happy to conspire in cynical campaigns such as this.

But when you're staring at white space, or twinning empty airtime, a story is a story — however manufactured.

THE Whiskas campaign is a fine example of R, advertising and hapless journalists working together to promote a brand. But there have been many recent occasions when advertising appeared powerless to improve an image in the face of negative PR.

Hot on the heels of British beef, the millennium, *The Express* and nursing recruitment comes news of a £15 million campaign being planned to encourage more people to save regularly, take out life insurance and join pension schemes. The surprise is that the advertisers funding the Savings and Long-Term Risk Project (SLTRP) are banks and insurance companies who are usually deadly rivals.

Headed by Sandy Leitch, the UK chairman of Zurich Financial Services, the SLTRP is working under the auspices of the Association of British Insurers. The aim is less to direct consumers to any particular form of investment than to encourage financial literacy and awareness.

An admirable project, you might think, although hardly altruistic. But it could easily backfire. It has been reported this week that the Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society has been fined by the Personal Investment Authority and could be forced to pay £10 million in compensation to 50,000 customers who may have been mis-sold ten-year endowment savings schemes. All it takes is for those new financially literate and aware consumers to be confronted by coverage of one more pensions mis-selling case, and it will be £15 million a year down the drain for the scheme.

SAD news this week that Body Shop is to scale back manufacturing and use jobs. The Roddicks are being pushed ever further into the background by Patrick Gour-

may, the chief executive brought in from Danone.

This is another case (after Marks & Spencer last week) of a retailer that might have benefited from more investment in advertising. For years, the Roddicks appeared to regard media ads as another form of pollution. They have only really dabbled with it in the past three years — too little, too late.

In the 1980s, Body Shop had a point of difference worth shouting about, but when rivals appeared and the likes of Boots cottoned on to "natural" ranges, it needed to reassert its specialness to a new generation. It chose not to do so. Those consumers voted with their feet.

A big advertising campaign is the last thing that Body Shop needs now, though. First, it has to address the wider marketing picture: its philosophy, its product range and the in-store experience of its customers.

REGULAR readers will be aware of the two-year dispute between Equity and the commercials production industry. This week Equity capitulated, lifting a ban on its members accepting voiceover work unless under the terms of a 1991 agreement. The actors' union had little choice. Only 15 per cent of about 15,000 voiceover engagements made between May 1997 and October 1998 were conducted under Equity's terms. Agencies pay well, and there was never going to be a shortage of non-Equity members willing to step into the breach. Eventually, many union members broke ranks. It is an entirely predictable conclusion to the dispute. Proof, in case you had any doubt, that in advertising, money talks.

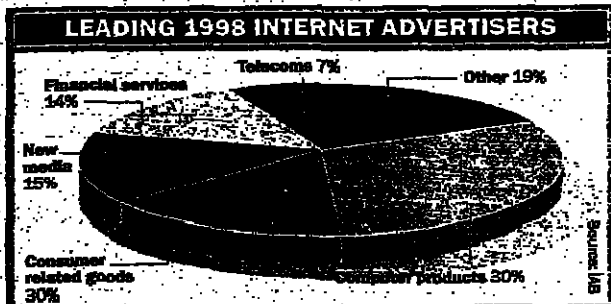
Stefano Hatfield is the Editor of Campaign

## media watch

ALTHOUGH the Internet is perhaps perceived primarily as a source of entertainment, information and communication, recent research suggests that commercial use is about to take off.

Findings by Continental Research show that home Internet use doubled in the past 12 months, to five million users by the end of 1998. Another 2.3 million home users and 1.9 million users in the workplace are expected to sign up within the next six months.

Although the reasons people go online vary, 43 per cent cited shopping as the main incentive. The value of total online sales for 1998 is estimated at



£230 million. One of the latest reports from Fletcher Research predicts that by 2003 the online shopping market will be worth £3.1 billion.

The creation of strong on-

line brands could prove to be the right incentives for customers. In light of this, revenue from advertising on the Internet increased massively during the first six months of 1998,

according to the Internet Advertising Bureau, totalling £7.9 million compared with £8.1 million in the whole of 1997.

The relationship between consumer spending and advertising has always been impossible to pin down, but it is perhaps significant that computer products accounted for most advertising revenue during the first two quarters of 1998, as well as by far the biggest area of consumer spending.

MediaTel's online media information and analysis service is accessed via the Internet at <http://www.mediatel.co.uk> (0171-439 7575).

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# Heads you lose, Charles ...

## GALLERIES:

An anniversary celebration reveals early spin-doctoring, says John Russell Taylor

Though the blame for image-manipulation and "spin" is generally placed on the shoulders of the late 20th century, you don't need to penetrate history very thoroughly to realise that these black arts have been with us since the dawn of time.

Anyone who doubts this should check out *The King's Head*, the new show at the Queen's Gallery. The King in question is Charles I, and the occasion of the show is the 350th anniversary of his execution, which falls tomorrow.

Other monarchs, of course, went in for image-building. Louis XIV, for instance, was a genius at angling his image to centralise France under his personal rule. And as the recent film pointed out, the secret of Elizabeth I's power was her deliberate reconstituting of herself as a Virgin Queen and untouchable icon.

With Charles, though, things are not so clear-cut. For one thing he was beheaded — deservedly, his Roundhead opponents said; as a holy martyr according to his surviving Cavalier supporters. Both sides used visual imagery to validate their points of view, and there was a veritable war of broadsheets and pamphlets, frequently illustrated with suitable images of the monarch — although it hardly seems to have occurred to any of the opposition to use caricature in the way that satirists of the Georges would.

One thing we seem to be in no doubt, and that is what Charles looked like. The engraved portraits, however crude and debased, are all agreed on the principal features, and in fact mostly go back to just two or three painted portraits, particularly the definitive images by Van Dyck. The existence of these later came about through Charles's eagerness, early in his reign, to impose a picture of himself on the public, and his good sense in employing an artist of Van Dyck's skill and stature to brand that image on the public imagination.



The slightly melancholic expression in Van Dyck's triple portrait of 1635 confers an air of tragic majesty on Charles I even 14 years before his execution

This even applied to the representation of the King by another first-rate artist: Bernini, whose bust of Charles dates from 1635. In carrying out Queen Henrietta Maria's commission, Bernini depended for his likeness on Van Dyck's triple portrait *Charles I in Three Positions*, now one of the most famous pieces in the Royal Collection, but virtually unknown until the early 19th century.

Van Dyck not only fixed the image of Charles, for ever, but in the process changed the whole British portrait tradition. One can physically see the moment of change in the double portrait of Charles and Henrietta Maria painted by Daniel Mytens in 1630-32, and later transformed by Van

Dyck, who completely repainted the figure of the Queen on the right. There is no doubt that Van Dyck was required to make the unprepossessing original image of the Queen (preserved in print reproductions and an early copy of the painting) into something decidedly more glamorous. He might also have modified the picture of the King, who under Mytens's brush looks faintly sneering, into the noble, faintly sad figure of later portraits, but for some reason he did not.

It may be suspected that hindsight confers this air of tragic majesty on Charles as painted by Van Dyck and engraved by Hollar. But apparently not, Bernini observed,

when he saw the Van Dyck triple portrait made specifically as documentation for him, that the King seemed to have a slightly melancholy aspect. The Bernini bust (destroyed in the Whitehall Palace fire of 1698) appears from the early copy in the exhibition to have retained this melancholy, but to have balanced it with a Baroque swagger. If this Charles does not look particularly like a saint, he could quite possibly turn out to be a martyr.

The question of whether, strictly speaking, he did or not is understandably sidestepped by the present exhibition. But then, even Charles's enemies seem to have given credit to a gallant loser: remember Marvell's "He nothing common

did or mean Upon that memorable Scene". Clearly in spite of everything the heroic image stuck: nowhere here would we get the slightest inkling that Charles I was the shortest English monarch (while his son Charles II was, oddly, the tallest). Even in the 17th century, the opposition did not stoop to remarking on the plight of the vertically challenged.

Indeed, perhaps the show could do with a little more scurrility. After all, isn't the point about the English Civil War surely that the Roundheads were right but repulsive, while the Cavaliers were romantic but wrong?

● *The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, SW1 0171-839 1377, daily 9.30am-4.30pm, until May 3*

## Strategic mismatch

### CONCERTS

One thing the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra does not need, as it struggles for financial survival, is a programme as ineffective as Petr Altrichter's latest compilation. Of course, if he wants to perform Martin's Rhapsody-Concerto for viola and orchestra, and if he has access to the soloist for it, he should do it. But an unfamiliar work like that has to be presented in a persuasive context rather than in the uninformative kind of jumble that the public instinctively recognises and avoids.

The work would have been strategically better placed before the interval, rather than at the end, and it could usefully have been preceded by another work written by a Czech composer in America, like Dvorak's *American Suite*. If Tabea Zimmermann was to perform another concerto, rather than a faceless number by one of the numer-

ous Stamitz family it should have been, say, Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* with the RLPO leader as joint soloist. After the Mozart, Brahms's *Serenade in A major*, with its prominent role for orchestral violas, would have made an appropriate ending.

Anyway, what the sparse audience in the Philharmonic Hall actually heard at the beginning of the concert was Dvorak's *Wind Serenade in D minor*, which was acceptably performed but contextually pointless. The Mozart they got after the interval was the "Paris" Symphony in D, K.297, which was brightly done but — given Altrichter's exaggerated signals to an orchestra that only needs to be conducted — with little chance of subtlety in interpretation. Zimmermann's playing in Karl Stamitz's *Viola Concerto in D* was too highly coloured and elaborated for the modest score it really is.

The Rhapsody-Concerto, on the other hand, found both soloist and conductor at their best. Although it betrays in its later stages Martin's characteristic impatience to get on with the next work in the catalogue, and although it is fairly shapeless in construction, it is redolent with melodious nostalgia. Zimmermann's elegiac sound, Altrichter's identification with Martin's Czech sentiments and the RLPO's sensitivity in accommodating itself to both of them combined to inspire affection of a kind rarely associated with this composer.

GERALD LARNER

## First prize for charm

When the American baritone Marcus DeLoach walked off with the first prize at the first Wigmore Hall International Song Competition in 1997, it was clear that the jury and audience had been impressed as much with his skills of communication and showmanship as with his musical artistry. After all, he beat a busily employed English opera singer and a young German Lieder specialist.

And it was DeLoach's love of his audience which won the day again when he returned to London to give his debut prize-winning recital. His wooing was shameless in his encores: having discovered that Henry Higgins lived just round the corner from the Wigmore Hall, he regaled his audience with *On the street where you live*, then went on to pester about lying awake with a dismal headache in highly polished Gilbert and Sullivan English.

Before this DeLoach had repeated one of his prize-winning songs, Aaron

Copland's *I bought me a cat*, at the end of an entertaining group of less well-known American pieces. Copland's contemporary, Randall Thompson, was introduced by his *Veiner Shoes*, the voice treading a hymn-like path through white snow and white silence. And Charles Ives's *The greatest man* was preceded by a little-known song by Richard Hageman: a mock-heroic setting of G.K. Chesterton's *The Donkey*.

In all these songs DeLoach worked overtime to kindle some response in a rather solemn audience. They had been charmed by five songs by Chausson which had gone before. Here DeLoach's clearly focused, effortlessly inflected baritone, with its ringing high register, had confirmed his sympathy for and ease in the French repertoire.

But if DeLoach's vocal concentration had been matched by closer verbal focus, then these songs and especially his preceding Mendelssohn group would have been twice as eloquent. Despite Thomas Bagwell's vivid accompanying, DeLoach's German tends to sound learnt by rote: verbal and musical rhythm is too laid-back, and weak vowels make for weak expression. DeLoach is just 24, and only three years out of Juillard. He has been busy on the boards at St Louis; but there is still time for more intensive coaching in Lieder, and perhaps some time out spent exploring Germany or Austria with his prize money.

HILARY FINCH

## Thoughts of Sheffield man

We all know a John Shuttleworth: he's one of those blokes from back home who are always happy to chat for a while and share the intimate details of the new back route they discovered while trying to avoid a traffic jam. A bit of a card but totally humourless, he's one of life's last great optimists with a vocabulary derived from *Which?* magazine and those little paper inserts that come wrapped around bottles of prescription medicine.

But John Shuttleworth has got something a bit more to him, something a bit special, and that's showbiz. Not only is he a keen student of acting; a skill derived from years of first-hand experience watching television; but he is also regular organist at Ken's Karvery, whither we are cordially invited to stuff ourselves silly on John's Bon Temp! buffet.

Shuttleworth's creator, Graham Fellows, has constructed an impeccably believable character, and his portrayal of the earnest Yorkshireman is as affectionate as it is comic. Funny as much of the material is, there are brief moments when one realises that Fellows is playing on our arrogance and tendency to patronise the non latte-drinking, non CD-playing, non e-mail-using elements of this world.

John Shuttleworth is precynical man par excellence. He can't stop himself from using every available function on his electronic keyboard, just because they're there. He's proud of his Austin Ambassador 4-reg —

### COMEDY

#### Ken's Karvery Broomfield

"It's a car that I revere", and when he tells us that his friend Tony dreams of being a paramedic, he thinks for a minute, then says: "Mind you, who doesn't — lovely!"

Of course, for the customers at the Karvery, it's the songs that we've come to hear. Ken Shuttleworth may be battling it out with a Primus stove backstage trying to prepare our starter, but we won't feel satisfied until we've heard such bathetic classics as *Life is Like a Salad Cart* (You only get one visit), *I Want To Be a Community Leader* and *I'm a Modern Man, I Do the Washing Up*. Apart from the *Frying Pan* (Because that's best left to soak, isn't it?)

In the harsh modern world, John Shuttleworth is a character to be cherished: polite, positive, charming and still convinced that Sheffield is the centre of the modern world (although he might consider moving to Skegness for the right cash incentive). I have never been to a show that has inspired the audience to throw Toffee Crisp bars on to the stage at the end, but then, there are precious few comedians who could come out with a line like "It's like that millennium bug is in my organ" without even a wiff of double entendre, so he probably deserves it.

HETTIE JUDAH

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POP ALBUMS

Nouveau-punk heroes

# Can't teach old punks new licks

NEW POP ALBUMS: The Offspring have brought a whiff of 1977 to the charts. Oh good, says David Sinclair

**THE OFFSPRING**  
*Americana* (Columbia COL 491656 £12.99)  
BY BRITAIN the pure pop bandwagon rolls merrily on. But it seems as if a reaction is finally setting in, and suddenly all sorts of American rock bands that have been tailing away unnoticed on the margins for most of the 1990s are enjoying an upswing in their fortunes in this country. Sebadoh and Mercury Rev were rampant at last week's *NME* shows. This week the Offspring are No 1 in the singles chart with their rock-rap rumble *Pretty Fly (For A White Guy)* and now their latest album, *Americana*, has come back from the dead.

Released in November, when it scraped into the Top 75 for one week, *Americana* is the kind of record that even two months ago hardly rated a mention outside the specialist music press. Now it has made its debut in the Top Ten.

A bunch of nouveau-punk diehards, the Californian quartet released their first album ten years ago, since when they

have doggedly pursued a one-track musical agenda which has secured them a string of internationally successful records, most notably *Smash*, released in 1994.

*Americana* conforms to a familiar formula, boasting mostly short, deceptively melodic tunes played at high volume and driven at uniformly reckless speed. The juvenile, liberal-baiting lyrics of *She's Got Issues* and *Walla Walla* are gilded with rowdy yobs' chorus chants, custom built for beery, mosh-pit singalongs, while the untypically relaxed *Why Don't You Get A Job?* — a song about a girlfriend who has "expensive tastes" — could well be another Top Five hit were it to be given a radio edit that trimmed the worst of the lyrical excesses.

Subtlety, then, is not their strongest point and one hesi-

lates to talk up a record such as *Americana* as the harbinger of a watershed in popular taste. But something is changing out there, and it is certainly not the Offspring.

**BLACK STAR LINER**

*Bengali Bantam Youth Experience!* (WEA 3964250042 £15.99)  
EVEN allowing for the groundbreaking efforts of Apache Indian, Asian Dub Foundation, Cornershop and others, the story of Anglo-Asian popular music has yet to advance much beyond the first chapter. And part of the charm of *Bengali Bantam Youth Experience!*, the second album by the Leeds-based trio Black Star Liner, is that it still sounds very much like a work in progress.

Restlessly innovative and endearingly exotic, the album nevertheless suffers from a mild case of attention deficit disorder. Early on, Choque Hosein (see *Interview below*) raps out his nonsense words on *Low* *BMW* with wonderful exuberance while tables and stars meld seamlessly into the trancey groove of *Claydon's Yellow Funk*. But the impact rather dissipates towards the end, as the album winds down with a sequence of increasingly vague instrumental pieces.

**THE MUTTON BIRDS**

*Rain, Steam & Speed* (shhh! SHCDE 001 £15.99)  
UNLIKE the migrating albatross from which they take their curiously unappealing

## ARTS



One hesitates to talk up a record such as the Offspring's *Americana* as the harbinger of a watershed in popular taste

name, the Mutton Birds are a band which stubbornly refuses to fly.

Still lacking an image, a hit single and — since they were dropped by Virgin — a proper record deal, the trio from New Zealand led by singer, guitarist and songwriter Don McGlashan continue to put out albums more in hope than expectation of any significant success.

*Rain, Steam & Speed*, their fourth studio recording, is a typically sober collection of high-quality, melodic-rock

songs, written and performed with a minimum of fuss but (pace the inevitable and optimistic comparisons with Crowded House) with little guile or originality either.

While the artfully clanging guitars lend drama and impetus to uptempo songs such as *Pulled Along By Love* and *As Close As This*, McGlashan fails to convert his earnest, introspective musings into sentiments of more universal appeal on *Jackie's Song*, *Hands Full*, *Ray* and other slow, minor-key offerings.

**KARAMASOV**

*On Arrival* (Satellite STL 016 £14.99)  
GROUPS such as Karamasov are the free radicals of the pop world. Flitting unpredictably around the fringes of art-rock, jazz and electronica, the Anglo-German quartet's primarily instrumental album, *On Arrival*, inhabits a parallel universe in which (whatever the title may suggest) the importance of boldly going far outweighs that of actually getting anywhere.

At their most forceful, as on

the opening track from this collection, *Uneven Surface*, they sound like American oddballs Primus without the silly vocals; at their most breezy and chic, as on *Sun Always Shines In Space*, they could almost be mistaken for the modish French duo, Air.

Brilliantly played, but militantly lo-fi, the album is conceived in a delightfully enquiring spirit, an echo of the days when "progressive" used to signal something unusual and exciting rather than self-indulgent and long-winded.

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- |         |                                 |                             |
|---------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 (2)   | You've Come A Long Way, Baby    | Fatboy Slim (Sire)          |
| 2 (2)   | I've Been Expecting You         | Robbie Williams (Chrysalis) |
| 3 (1)   | Talk A Good Game                | Cornershop (Virgin)         |
| 4 (6)   | Step One                        | Steps (A&M)                 |
| 5 (3)   | Leslie & Gendreau - The Book Of | George Michael (Epic)       |
| 6 (4)   | Where We Belong                 | Boyzone (Polygram)          |
| 7 (8)   | Forgiveness, Not Forgetfulness  | Cornershop (Virgin)         |
| 8 (7)   | Ray Of Light                    | Madonna (Maverick)          |
| 9 (14)  | Big Little Style                | Will Smith (Columbia)       |
| 10 (14) | Americana                       | Offspring (Columbia)        |

FIGURE IN BRACKETS INDICATES LAST WEEK'S POSITION

Nigel Williamson meets Black Star Liner and Joi, the latest bands to emerge from the British Asian underground

When Talvin Singh made an album called *The Sound of the Asian Underground*, the title seemed an accurate enough description. While the music of second-generation British Asians thrived in cultish clubs such as London's Blue Note, the rest of the world remained indifferent. Two years on the name is woefully out of date. British Asian musicians boldly mixing East and West have marched into the mainstream as the sound of multicultural Britain.

First Cornershop, with their roots in Punjab and Wolverhampton, topped the charts with *Bringing Up Asia*, a homage to the king of Indian film soundtracks. Then Asian Dub Foundation stormed the barricades with their dynamic brand of home-grown agit-pop. Now come Black Star Liner and Joi, who have both been

around for much of the decade but find themselves with major label deals and new albums fusing their Asian heritage with high-octane Western dance beats. Waiting in the wings is Amar, a 19-year-old Punjabi singer from Walsall, whose debut is due later this year amid rumours that her deal with Warner Bros is worth £3 million. All of a sudden, the Asian underground is beginning to look like an irresistible movement.

Earlier this week, Black Star Liner made an extraordinary appearance at London's Jazz Cafe. What began as a routine music industry album launch ended up as a riotous celebration of an idea whose time has come with songs celebrating such British Asian heroes as Prince Naseem and sounding like the Happy Mondays jamming with Ravi Shankar.

## Brimful of Asia on the 45 (and LP)

"Part of me groans when people talk about the Asian underground," admits Choque Hosein, Black Star Liner's charismatic frontman. "At school I was the only Asian or making me play tambourine and bongos in front of the whole class because I was supposed to have a sense of rhythm. It was such a stereotype. People think all Asians can do is dance and cook."

His Leeds upbringing makes him sound more like Geoff Boycott than Sachin Ten-

dulkar, but he recalls watching football at Elland Road and being abused as the only Asian on the terraces. "When I began playing in guitar bands it was white musicians and white audiences. Now we are everywhere. We took your jobs and now we've taken your music," he jokes. "Asians have become versed in rock culture. It's ours too, and now we are giving it back to you."

Hosein grew up feeling an outsider not only because of the racial abuse he suffered, but because he was also at odds with many of the attitudes of his Indian father. Somewhere out of that conflict comes the music of Black Star Liner. "I didn't understand that many of my Dad's prejudices came from his background. He used to make us spend the summer holidays doing extra homework. That's the way Asian families are. But he taught me a lot about where he came from and about my grandparents and I always took great pleasure in that heritage. He played Bollywood music. I'd be listening to the Rolling Stones, and it was all mixed in together."

Paradoxically, it was white rock music that drove him back to his Asian roots. "I heard all these psychedelic records using sitars and Indian influences. Then, when I lis-

tened to real Asian music, I realised that the rock stuff wasn't very good. I was sure I could do it better because I understood it. For me it was real, not just some cool multicultural hippy bull."

A week earlier I had sat in a cafe in the heart of London's East End with Farook and Haroon Shamsher, the two Bengali brothers who constitute Joi. Their new single, *Asian Vibes*, a fabulous swirling piece of British Asian pop which puts the pretensions of Kula Shaker to shame, is released next month, to be followed by their debut album in March.

Like Hosein, the brothers are proud of their Asian heritage but are equally steeped in Western influences. "We were born and brought up here and influenced by hip hop, funk, soul and reggae," Haroon says. "But our Dad had a shop selling music to the Asian community so we heard traditional Bengali music."

They started mixing the different elements, DJ-ing at clubs with the Joi Bangla Sound System. "When we started rapping we would give the crowd a Michael Jackson groove and then we would mix in a traditional Bengali thing, very slowly so they hardly noticed," Farook recalls. "Then

we would turn it up and they would wonder what the hell it was — but they would still be dancing to it. It was seen as off-the-wall Paki music but it seemed very natural to us. We wanted to give our own people a sense of identity."

Last year they made the transition from sound system to full performing band, adding guitars and singers. "We can't be disappointed that the me-

dia is finally paying attention to the Asian scene, because it is what we have worked towards. But I hope it isn't going to be seen as a passing phase. If it gets overhyped it could get lost when the next fad comes along."

● Bengali Bantam Youth Experience by Black Star Liner is reviewed above. *Asian Vibes* by Joi is released by Real World/Virgin on Feb 22

## Laugh? I nearly danced

A FEW years ago, comedy was meant to be the new rock'n' roll. Barenaked Ladies go one better and combine the two, not as some novelty act with a trite line in slapstick parody but by making serious music that at the same time is able to laugh at pop's pretensions. The likes of Madness and Squeeze have been there before, but humour is a rare intruder in rock's emotional terrain, where looking miserable has become part of the job.

The Barenakeds, on the other hand, just can't take the grins off their faces — and they have a lot to smile about right now. The Canadian quintet's first British show in almost three years found them riding the crest of a wave, with three million sales in America for their latest album, *Stunt*.

At the Shepherd's Bush Empire most of the humour came

LIVE GIG

Barenaked Ladies  
Empire, W12

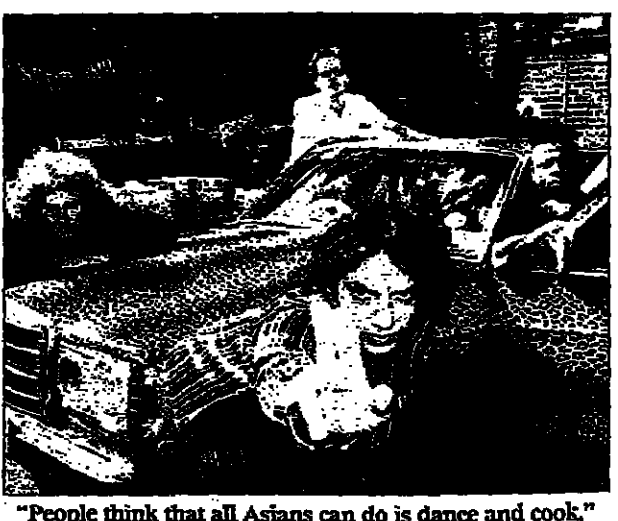
from the two frontmen, Steven Page and Ed Robinson, who could make an alternative career as a stand-up duo, except that they are having much more fun being improbable pop stars. The chubby and bespectacled Page combines his classic rock voice with the mannerisms of Mike Myers in the spoof movie *Austin Powers*, while Robinson's best gag involved getting a security guard to play a guitar duet with him.

The jokes worked because there is nothing comical about their musical accomplishments. The band rocked, the songs showed melodic flair, the harmonies were gorgeous and songs such as *Be My Yoko Ono* and *Brian Wilson* displayed a perfect understanding of pop's iconography. Some might find their unrelenting jollity irritating. In a bizarre ritual now familiar at every gig, a packet of macaroni cheese was thrown and Page picked it up and proceeded to read the list of ingredients. The crowd for some reason found this hilarious.

But *One Week*, a white college boy rap, was both smart and funny and is destined to be a Top Five single here. "It's all been done before," they sang in their opening number. Of course it has, but seldom with such wit and entertaining style.

NIGEL  
WILLIAMSON

THIS WEEK:  
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# EDUCATION

## 'A danger to young women'

Educating girls was still taboo when Benenden was founded, says Susan Elkin

In the decade when women are frequently said to be overtaking men, it is easy to forget that only 75 years ago education for women was considered an indulgence, and then only for a privileged few.

It has taken a long time for women's education to catch up with its male counterpart. There has been enormous progress in a relatively short time since the pioneers Miss Beale and Miss Buss founded Cheltenham Ladies' College and London Collegiate School in the mid-19th century.

A new book, *Benenden — A Great Company*, celebrates the Kent school's first 75 years and the changing face of women's education. "Continuous mental effort is a danger to young women" was the opinion in the 1890s of the British Medical Association. It declared that too much brain work during puberty would damage women's future reproductive capacity. How the education of women progressed in the face of such opposition is astounding.

David Souden, the author of *Benenden*, describes the massive rear-guard campaign. By the turn of the century there were 61 girls' schools, 22 running under the auspices of the Girls' Public Day School Trust (now the Girls' Day School Trust).

Benenden — the former Victorian Gothic home of Lord Rothenham, which is set in magnificent parkland — did not aim to be an academic hot-house. Yet today it holds a high position in the league tables and almost all its sixth-formers go on to university.

The school was founded by Christine Sheldon, Anne Hindle and Kathleen Bird in 1924. The adventurous personalities of the founders are somewhat belied by the staid tweedy air they present in the 1948 portrait by Kenneth Green, which hangs in the school's entrance hall. In fact, the three were bored, thirty-something escapists from Wycombe Abbey who were out to break the educational mould.

Miss Bird, known as Birdie, would recount: "We hatched the plan in the stationery cupboard at Wycombe Abbey, where we used to go to eat buns."

With only £100 each to invest, they relied on their powerful blend of idealism and eagerness to find enough backers to enable them to open with 24 girls. They wanted to create a modern, relaxed envi-



Women getting out there: Benenden pupils take part in a lesson on Shakespeare in the school's Kent grounds during the inter-war years

ronment, rather than one bound by petty rules or that mimicked the ancient establishments attended by their pupils' brothers. Their charges would be able to "develop freely. As one early pupil recalls: "You could learn anything in the world you fancied: bellringing or Greek, forestry or pottery, or how to cook salmon. Kindness mattered a great deal and when I left I cried for a fortnight because I truly believed that the best years of my life were over."

Today's Benenden girls, Mr Souden says wryly, are more likely to be surfing the Internet than keeping poultry in the pursuit of the "hobbies" so passionately advocated by Miss Bird.

Then, when examination curriculums did not hold eve-

ry school in such thrall, one afternoon a week was systematically devoted to horse-breeding, learning a musical instrument, writing poetry and other activities. Everyone participated and there wasn't much "them and us" any more than there is at Benenden now. "Can I have another butterfly net," one pupil wrote home in the 1920s, "because I have a friend called Birdie who keeps borrowing mine?"

Mr Souden writes: "The 1920s were boom years for independent schools. There was an abundance of dedicated teachers who were part of that substantial body of unmarried women in Britain between the wars. For the first generation of university-educated women, teaching was one of the few available outlets for a respectable career."

It is hard for Benenden's cur-

rent pupils, who take equal opportunities for granted, to grasp that when their great-grandmothers were schoolgirls science teaching was almost non-existent.

Mr Souden cites the example of one Benenden girl who went up to Oxford in 1927 having learnt what passed for science in a laboratory without gas. Miss Burrell, the science mistress, could only draw a Bunsen burner for her, so the student had to have private tuition before university.

Today opportunities have never been greater for women, and most expect to work for a significant part, if not all, their active lives. But it still takes a school history to remind us how far we have come.

● Benenden — A Great Company is published by Granta Editions at £18.95.

## A case for natural justice

The Independent Schools Tribunal, happily, meets only rarely. Until this week's disqualification of Robin Lindsay, the former Headmaster and proprietor of Sherborne Preparatory School, it last sat three years ago. Many of those who followed Mr Lindsay's case will think that there should be changes before it does so again.

The barring of Mr Lindsay was inevitable: a succession of inspection reports over a dozen years painted a picture of maladministration and questionable behaviour. He showed an apparently obsessive interest in boys' physical development, constantly supervising showers and weighing the rugby team naked. He would wander the school in pyjamas during the day and sometimes took children into his bedroom at night, stroking their heads, cuddling or tickling them if he found them awake.

Because of an unusual combination of circumstances, however, Mr Lindsay denied himself the right to answer even more serious charges. On the word of a psychiatrist, he was branded a "fixed paedophile", and three former pupils' allegations of sexual assaults were heard without challenge. Although the complaints relating to the assaults were not upheld, they remain on file. The most serious of them, made years after the event by a boy Mr Lindsay expelled,

was not pursued by the Director of Public Prosecutions and would surely have been demolished in cross-examination.

Mr Lindsay appealed against disqualification to save the school, to which he had devoted most of his life, from immediate closure. He then withdrew the appeal to facilitate a takeover by a local trust, but the tribunal's rules require that the case must be heard anyway. It is hard to imagine another legal forum in which such damaging allegations could be heard without any defence.

Now 70, Mr Lindsay may conform to a psychiatrist's definition of a paedophile, but the behaviour described in evidence to the tribunal did not seem to fit the common

usage of the term. Many boarders from previous eras will recall similar characters, who would have fallen foul of modern convention but were not abusers. Roy Chapman, the former Headmaster of Malvern College, who was also an expert witness, correctly judged that Sherborne was a school "in a time warp".

Owner-head teachers of preparatory schools can be a law unto themselves and occasionally ride roughshod over the interests of pupils and staff. The penalty of disqualification may then be the only one available to curb their excesses, but there must be natural justice in the treatment of appeals. A one-sided public hearing is hardly that.



John O'Leary

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THE TIMES

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CHANGING TIMES

## Your country needs you

How remarkable that one of the spin-offs from the British Empire is an education system in Singapore that is highly regarded, and whose professional workers are so valued that applications for teacher-training places are oversubscribed.

What a contrast with the United Kingdom, where we have a profession that is being talked up by politicians after being battered to the ground by them in previous decades.

Recruits are still hard to find: we print glossy brochures, we join the "Milk Round" at universities, an advertising campaign declares that no one forgets a good teacher and the Government says it is going to pay superteachers more. Despite this, we cannot encourage people to join our profession.

Examples that point to the reasons are numerous: my son starts his training contract at a few firm on the curve salary as it takes an "honours" graduate with one year's postgraduate training seven years to reach. We ask teachers to work in schools that are in a bad state of repair. We ask them to teach without providing them with the tools of the trade. How odd that a newspaper reported recently for the first time in 100 years that the teachers in a village school did not have to queue to go to the outside toilet — a Third World provision at the end of the 20th century.

Rhetoric is not enough: the Government needs to be creative. One way forward is to create a system of short-service commissions in teaching, akin to those used in the Armed Forces. Given that transferable skills are fashionable, it is time to recognise that a trained teacher is a priceless asset in a huge range of organisations outside education because of the skills required.

Like the Armed Forces, the teaching profession would benefit from short-service commissions, says Jenny Stephen

The teacher has to refine exceptional communication skills and to deal with children across all boundaries of gender, age and ability. The teacher has to take swaths of factual information and boil it down to bite-sized lumps, packaging it attractively and tailoring its delivery to strict time limits. The teacher has to blend strict professional ethics and principles with a capacity to learn when and where to compromise. The teacher has to work as a member of a team and yet retain individuality. The teacher has to view people in their entire complexity, as a brain and as a body, as a set of emotions as well as an intellect. The teacher has to come to terms with external methods of assessment and national standards, yet never stop self-monitoring.

The teacher has to be able to learn quickly and to take his or her work home. The teacher has to learn to adapt, from A level to remedial, from classroom to playground. The teacher has to be willing to take a decision, and to know when to defer a decision. The teacher has to read what others write and assess it, as well as writing reports for others to read and assess. The teacher has to learn how to keep up in his or her subject as well as teaching it.

These are crucial skills which we should learn to transfer. Short service commissions work for the Army, why not for teaching? Industry, the Civil Service, universities and the professions need these short-service commission schemes

where teachers can serve their learning time in schools and then be guaranteed transfer of their skills back to a wide range of other careers.

Perhaps short-service commissions might stop the Government from having to dictate the agenda for everything taught in schools and let that agenda be dictated by the customers. Indeed, the increased communication between sectors might mean that schools started to understand what industry needs and industry might learn what schools can reasonably be asked to provide. It might mean that language skills match what business and the country needs and that English lessons resuscitate grammar, and that information technology skills serve the needs of employers, not the whims of the pupils. Above all, such a scheme would mean that more postgraduates would enter education because it would be seen as an excellent starting point for any one of a number of careers, and not as a vocational cul-de-sac.

Far more people would be lured into teaching because the relevance of its skills base, and hence its credibility and respectability, would be re-established after years in the doldrums. For employers, it would mean a steady flow of staff whose skills had been tempered in the furnace of the school and classroom, in one of the most answerable and demanding professions in the world.

● The author is Head of The Grange School in Hartford, Cheshire.



## SAILING

# Bullimore's yen for adventure survives intact

BY EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT

TONY BULLIMORE used to be a successful yachtsman, though not particularly well known outside the rarefied world of international multi-hull racing. Then, two years ago, he was plucked from the Southern Ocean by the Australian Navy and life has never been the same for the former nightclub owner from Bristol.

Given the extraordinary circumstances of his rescue and his remarkable instinct for survival, it is not surprising that Bullimore has had difficulty putting the episode behind him. In the past 18 months he has given talks, written a book and helped to make documentaries about his experiences. He has had to put up with people assuming that he has made millions out of it — he has not and the much-typed sponsorship by a chocolate manufacturer never happened — and he admits that he is growing weary of it.

At the tender age of 60, what he wants above all is to be taken seriously as a yachtsman and he has thrown himself headlong into his most ambitious project to date with the purchase of the old Nigel Irens-designed catamaran, *Royal 6 Sun Alliance*, formerly the round-the-world record-breaker, *ENZA* New Zealand. It is a project aimed at rewriting records, including the

Jules Verne non-stop round-the-world time, and entering The Race, the non-stop round-the-world dash for unlimited boats that starts in December 2000.

This is not going to be easy sailing but Bullimore is up for it, untroubled by the ghosts returning to haunt him from the icy waters 1,000 miles southwest of Fremantle. Bullimore says that his appetite for the big time is "exactly the same" as it ever was and, when he walks on *ENZA*'s hulls, he gets the same thrill as he always did from a multi-hull.

"I'm still smoking and I'm desperate to give it up," Bullimore said. "But I'm nowhere near my age. I feel great. I can hack it with people a lot younger than me running, jumping, I'm all right." The big cat is at present on the hard at Redcliffe Wharf in Bristol where she is being tended over before a substantial programme of modifications, which include adding eight feet to the bows and fitting a new, bigger wingmast. The aim is to make the boat, which was originally launched in 1983 as the *Formula TAC*, as competitive as possible at a time when an unknown number of huge catamarans are being constructed for The Race.

So far, only one, Steve Fos-

sett's 105ft *PlayStation*, has been completed and it is far from certain how many more will be built. It is for this reason that Bullimore and Irens dismiss those who argue that the old *ENZA* is yesterday's news.

Irens believes that the extra length in the hulls and power in the rig could lift her average potential speed in the Southern Ocean from around 18 knots to possibly 24 knots and he is confident his "old warhorse" still has a competitive future.

"The new era is so indeterminate at the moment," Irens said. "We don't know what these new boats are going to do, which ones are going to get out and which ones are going to break down when they do get out. What Tony's boat represents, assuming he does the work, is a good standard entry or a benchmark. Someone may well go faster in a new boat but Tony's boat is a known quantity that can only be improved."

Bullimore is no stranger to risk-taking, either on the water or off it. But he has spent £400,000 buying *ENZA* and the project has already swallowed up another £100,000. Now he needs a commercial backer to help him pay for the work and the campaign. There are three interested parties and he is confident that one of them will sign by the end of February.

However, if he cannot find a sponsor, there are three other syndicates, including one in France, that are prepared to buy the project from him. They believe that Bullimore's out-price approach to The Race could well be the way ahead. But the ever-optimistic Bullimore is hoping it won't come to that.

"The thing is," he said, "I've got no doubts we will do well in this boat. Nigel has made it clear to me that, with all the modifications we are doing, we are actually taking her into the 21st century, ready to race."



Bullimore has grown weary of reliving his Southern Ocean rescue and longs to be taken seriously as a yachtsman



Krylova and Ovsianikov perform their original dance in Prague yesterday

## Russian pair on brink of winning elusive title

ANJELIKA KRYLOVA and Oleg Ovsianikov strengthened their position as the leading eligible ice dancers in the world yesterday by winning the second round of the ice dance competition at the European figure skating championships.

The three-times champions of Russia skated in a manner befitting the holders of the Olympic silver and world gold medals and are on course to claim their first European title when the competition concludes tonight with the free dance.

Krylova, 25, and Ovsianikov, 29, have spent much of their career in the shadow of another Russian couple,

FROM ANGELA COURT IN PRAGUE

Pasha Grishuk and Yevgeni Platov, the two-time Olympic gold medal winners, who have turned professional and dissolved their partnership.

Although Krylova and Ovsianikov came close, they never defeated them, having to settle for silver at three European championships, two world championships and the 1998 Olympic Games.

Yesterday, in the original dance section of the competition, their waltz, performed to *The Drinking Song* from *La Traviata*, and sung by Pavarotti, contained textbook skating and strong artistry.

Marina Anissina and Gwendal Peizerat, the Olympic bronze medal winners from France, are second. Their free dance to *The Moon* is the *Iron Mask* soundtrack is quite spectacular and likely to be one of the highlights of the entire championships.

Charlotte Clements and Gary Shortland, the British champions, skated a dreamy, lifting waltz without significant errors and held on to fourth place.

The women skate their short programmes this afternoon. Maria Butyrskaya, from Russia, remains the favourite for gold.

## HOCKEY

## S Africa may join England on tour

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN

SOUTH Africa may join England on their tour of Argentina at the end of March to set up a three-nation series at three different venues.

Barry Dancer, the England coach, explained yesterday that the South Africans are committed to a home series against a side from the Australian Institute of Sports, but are hoping to bring these matches forward so as to be free for the trip to Argentina.

In the National League premier division, Teddington's line-up at home in Cannock on Sunday includes Jon Hauck, who scored all their goals in a 5-4 victory over Old Loughboroughians. Neil Campbell, the Teddington manager, said: "For the first time this season, we were at full strength. We now expect to upset a few more leading teams." Cannock report no injury problems.

Except for Peter Riley, the defender, who is on a weekend commitment with St George's Weirbridge, Guildford can call on all of their best players for the home match against Canterbury, the league leaders.

Southgate, having solved most of their injury problems, are taking a squad strong enough to meet the challenge by Beeston, who hope to lift themselves back into fourth position, above Reading. Their ambition is unlikely to be achieved, for Reading are on a visit to Brooklands, who are still languishing at the bottom of the table. East Grinstead, who beat Brooklands 9-1 last week, visit Holmslo, whose relegation worries have not yet eased.

Sutton, with Greg Nicol, the South African centre forward, back in their ranks, are pushing fervently towards the top of the first division, but they seem unlikely to displace Barford Tigers, who should take full points from Indian Gymkhana.

Doncaster and Havant continue their chase to finish on top, but the matter will not end there. The champions will have to play off against the tenth-placed team in the premier division to decide the last place in the restructured premier division next season.

## Bollington believes her time has come

BY CATHY HARRIS

LYNN BOLLINGTON has played for Chelmsford for 23 years and although the club have come close to capturing the national indoor league title on several occasions, they have never triumphed. This weekend, in the play-offs at Crystal Palace, Bollington is determined to change that.

The former England outdoor international and captain of the indoor side believes that few would begrudge the Essex club the honour. She said: "We've always played well, in the right spirit, and taken it seriously. We have edged closer and closer, just missing out to Slough last season. It's about time we won."

She acknowledges that competition in the round-robin event will be tough, especially against Slough, the holders and Highways, the former champions, but remains confident. She said: "We have managed some good practice sessions and are playing well as a unit, our main strength."

With the English Hockey Association's continued failure to secure sponsorship deals, preparations have proved expensive. The hotel bill for the qualifying weekend cost Chelmsford £700 and Bollington, 37, confirmed that a two-hour training session in an indoor hall costs £100. She said: "It makes it difficult to practise — we end up on various surfaces, in various venues at various times."

The good news is that Lorraine Marsden, the former England indoor and outdoor international, could make her first appearance for the club this season after recovering from illness. "She's just the sort of player you want on the bench. Her presence would really boost our chances," Bollington said.

In Prague, the England Under-21 indoor team open their campaign in the European Nations Cup against Slovakia today. However, one has to question the wisdom of spending more than £20,000 to send a poorly prepared twelve-strong squad, accompanied by eight officials, to a tournament snubbed by both Germany and Holland.

## FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL	
UNL-BALL TROPHY: Quarter-finals: Birmingham Bulls 72 Manchester Eagles 56; Derby Storm 109 Newcastle Eagles 102; London Towers 61 Leicester Tigers 62; Sheffield Sharks 82 Chester Jets 76.	
SUPERLEAGUE: Quarter-finals: London Leopards 76 Edinburgh Rhinos 72.	

CRICKET	
ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL: Kingsmead, South Africa 274-9 (50 overs) L. Klusener 64, W. J. Cronje 58, C. L. Hooper 4-52, West Indies 279-1 (50 overs) S. Chanderpaul 52, South Africa best West Indies by 55 runs.	

FOOTBALL	
Central Districts Emerging Players v England Under-19	
Palmerston North first day of three. Central Districts Emerging Players, with three first-rounders in hand, are level with England Under-19.	

ENGLAND UNDER-19: First Innings	
M. Gough c. Austin b. Holland	1
M. Gough c. Austin b. Holland	1
M. Gough c. Austin b. Holland	1
M. Gough c. Austin b. Holland	1
M. Gough c. Austin b. Holland	1
M. Gough c. Austin b. Holland	1
M. Gough c. Austin b. Holland	1
M. Gough c. Austin b. Holland	1
M. Gough c. Austin b. Holland	1
M. Gough c. Austin b. Holland	1

SNOW REPORTS	
Depth (cm)	Conditions
L	U
100	Good
100	Good
100	Good
100	Good
100	Good
100	Good
100	Good
100	Good
100	Good
100	Good

## SPORT IN BRIEF

**SWIMMING:** Michelle Smith-de Bruin will not have her appeal against a four-year suspension heard until May 3, the Court of Arbitration for Sport said yesterday. A decision on the Irish triple Olympic champion's case was expected this month, but the four-month time limit to hear the appeal will be extended because of difficulties in bringing all parties together.

**GOLF:** WEST PALM BEACH, Florida: LPGA Champion Debi Thomas leading the first round of the LPGA Championship at the Poinsettia Country Club. The 34-year-old American is leading by 10 strokes after 36 holes.

**ICE HOCKEY:** SECONDA SUPERLEAGUE: Australia's Scott Murray leading the first round of the Superleague at the Sydney Ice Stadium. Murray is leading by 10 goals after 36 holes.

**RUGBY UNION:** WELSH CHAMPIONSHIP: Pool A: Cardiff 19, Newport 17, 15-10. Pool B: Cardiff 19, Newport 17, 15-10. Pool C: Cardiff 19, Newport 17, 15-10.

**SNOKER:** CARDIFF: World Snooker Championship: Ronnie O'Sullivan leading the first round of the World Snooker Championship at the Cardiff Centre. O'Sullivan is leading by 10 frames after 36 holes.

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## SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Begin Bridge with *The Times*: Lesson 41 - Responding Round-up

We have now covered all the basic responses to opening bids at the one level so here is a quiz to test your understanding. What would you respond to your partner's One Heart opening on the following hands?

(A) ♠ K J 10 5 (B) ♠ K Q 4 3 (C) ♠ K J 10 6 5  
♥ 5 4 3 2 (D) ♠ 4 3 2 (E) ♠ K 10 3 (F) ♠ 6 5 4 3  
♦ A Q 5 (G) ♠ K 10 7 2 (H) ♠ A K 10 8 5  
♣ 7 6 (I) ♠ 7 6 5 (J) ♠ K 10 7 (K) ♠ A Q 8 7 6  
♣ 4 3 (L) ♠ K 10 7 6 (M) ♠ K 10 7 (N) ♠ A Q 8 7 6  
♣ 4 3 (O) ♠ K 10 7 6 (P) ♠ K 10 7 (Q) ♠ A Q 8 7 6  
♣ 4 3 (R) ♠ K 10 7 6 (S) ♠ K 10 7 (T) ♠ A Q 8 7 6  
♣ 4 3 (U) ♠ K 10 7 6 (V) ♠ K 10 7 (W) ♠ A Q 8 7 6  
♣ 4 3 (X) ♠ K 10 7 6 (Y) ♠ K 10 7 (Z) ♠ A Q 8 7 6  
♣ 4 3

With Hand (A) raise to Three Hearts. You have found an eight-card fit so there is no need to bid your spades. On Hand (B) you don't have enough to bid at the two level so start with One Spade. Hand (C) is not a trick question. Just start with One Spade. On Hand (D), with 8 HCP, you don't have enough to bid at the two level but you can't support partner with only three cards, so start with One No-Trump. Hand (E) is perfect for an immediate jump to Three No-Trumps. On Hand (F) I would bid Two Diamonds and then rebid Three Diamonds if partner bid Two Hearts. Sometimes we might miss a 4-4 spade fit but it goes against the grain not to bid such a good suit at all.

There are just a couple of refinements we have not yet covered. What would you respond to your partner's One Club opening?

(G) ♠ A Q 3 (H) ♠ A Q 3 (I) ♠ A Q 3  
♥ K 4 3 (J) ♠ K 4 3 (K) ♠ K 4 3  
♦ J 10 7 6 (L) ♠ J 10 7 6 (M) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (N) ♠ J 10 7 6 (O) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (P) ♠ J 10 7 6 (Q) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (R) ♠ J 10 7 6 (S) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (T) ♠ J 10 7 6 (U) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (V) ♠ J 10 7 6 (W) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (X) ♠ J 10 7 6 (Y) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (Z) ♠ J 10 7 6 (AA) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (AB) ♠ J 10 7 6 (AC) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (AD) ♠ J 10 7 6 (AE) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (AF) ♠ J 10 7 6 (AG) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (AH) ♠ J 10 7 6 (AI) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (AJ) ♠ J 10 7 6 (AK) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (AL) ♠ J 10 7 6 (AM) ♠ J 10 7 6  
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♣ 7 6 5 (AP) ♠ J 10 7 6 (AQ) ♠ J 10 7 6  
♣ 7 6 5 (AR) ♠ J 10 7 6 (AS) ♠ J 10 7 6  
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♣ 7 6 5 (DR) ♠ J 10 7 6 (DS) ♠ J 10 7 6  
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♣ 7 6 5 (JT) ♠



RACING: FORMER HUNTER CHASER ENTERS FESTIVAL PLOT AFTER IMPRESSIVE WINCANTON PERFORMANCE

# Double Thriller joins Gold Cup suspects

By CHRIS MCGRATH

AS IN all the best thrillers, the big question will not be answered until the closing pages, but the plot certainly thickens in intriguing fashion at Wincanton yesterday. For a budding hurdler, Double Thriller, who has been on the way to his first run for Paul Nicholls, Double Thriller now finds himself among the leading suspects for both the Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup and Martell Grand National.

In beating four inferior by a distance under top weight in the Racing Channel Handicap Chase, Double Thriller achieved as much or as little as was necessary just to keep



Double Thriller jumps clear on his way to a commanding victory in the Racing Channel Handicap Chase at Wincanton yesterday

such aspirations alive. More significant, perhaps, was the new perspective placed on his status as the only horse to have beaten Teeton Mill under Rules. His brawny physique, agile jumping and tireless gallop must now be incorporated into the teasing web of evidence surrounding their encounter in a hunter chase at Cheltenham last April.

The bookmakers are certainly taking a positive view. The Gold Cup sponsor cut him from 40/1 to 16/1, while he is as short as 12/1 for Aintree as last season's Joe Tizzard, his

teenage jockey, could face a choice to puzzle the most astute of his seniors if See More Business, also trained by Nicholls, revives his own Gold Cup claims in the Pillar Chase at Cheltenham on Saturday.

Robert Thornton, who rode a treble for Nicholls at Kempton last weekend, will doubtless be especially curious to learn his colleague's decision, while the talented Earthenover, another of last season's top hunters, could compound the

riches at Cheltenham on February 11. Double Thriller carries the colours of Reg. Wilkins, who enjoyed such success with Double Silk. "We've got the facilities and the time, while Reg was training him more for

fun," Nicholls said. "He did very well with him and gave him a good grounding. He's been very exciting at home and I've been nervous about today, because when you think you've got a good horse you want him to look a star on the track."

"He will come on for the run, because he was held up with coughing over Christmas, and he has only done four bits of work since. This ground would have been tacked enough for him, too. He's learning all the time. He has

only won a handicap off 129 here, so realistically he still has a long way to go."

An intimidating presence in the paddock, Double Thriller was fresh and keen in the early stages and Tizzard let him jump into the lead at the ninth. Having got away with flying a couple of fences and shortening nimbly into one or two others, he was running away throughout. Tizzard took a look over his shoulder leaving the back straight and could coast clear of the least exhausted of his pursuers, Malwood Castle.

"He jumped for fun and did it all on the bridge," Tizzard said. "He was very good for a big horse when he got in close. He's a big, long-striding horse but he'd have gears as well."

The next chapter for Double Thriller will be the Jim Ford Chase back at Wincanton on February 25, by which time the National weights will have been published.

In the interim, punters will be poring over his defeat of Teeton Mill, since successful in the Hennessy Gold Cup and the King George VI Chase, shortly after the grey had joined Venetia Williams. There are those who believe that Teeton Mill, so impressive on flat tracks this season, "faltered up the Cheltenham hill that day. Either way, it appears rather more forgivable to have been outstayed by Double Thriller after yesterday."

## Hi Hedley rescues lost cause at last

THE victory of Hi Hedley in the Hinchingsbrook Novices' Chase at Huntingdon yesterday proved once again that there is no such thing as a lost cause in National Hunt racing.

Hi Hedley, who had been booked for third with four fences to jump as King Pin and Sursum Corda disputed the lead, King Pin had taken the measure of Sursum Corda at the second last, but, with the race in his pocket, refused at the final fence.

Sursum Corda also ground to a halt at the obstacle and Hi Hedley, who had slowly been clawing back the deficit, nipped through under Michael Brennan to gain the unlikely of victories.

Chris Kinane, assistant to Hi Hedley's owner-trainer, Geoff Hubbard, said: "We deserved a change of luck. Michael said they had set off far too quickly and felt he would have finished second anyway. The horse was brave to go through that little gap. He could have turned it in."

Sursum Corda, trained by Sue Smith and ridden by Seamus Durack, maintained his 100 per cent hurdling record with a fluent display in the EBF Novices' Hurdle.

### YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

#### Huntingdon

1.20 (2m 5f 110y) hdl, 1. Cathedral Belle (G. Lee, 7-2) beat 2. Zahaia (12-1), 3. Hedley (12-1), 4. Alton (12-1), 5. M. C. (12-1), 6. M. C. (12-1), 7. M. C. (12-1), 8. M. C. (12-1), 9. M. C. (12-1), 10. M. C. (12-1), 11. M. C. (12-1), 12. M. C. (12-1), 13. M. C. (12-1), 14. M. C. (12-1), 15. M. C. (12-1), 16. M. C. (12-1), 17. M. C. (12-1), 18. M. C. (12-1), 19. M. C. (12-1), 20. M. C. (12-1), 21. M. C. (12-1), 22. M. C. (12-1), 23. M. C. (12-1), 24. M. C. (12-1), 25. M. C. (12-1), 26. M. C. (12-1), 27. M. C. (12-1), 28. M. C. (12-1), 29. M. C. (12-1), 30. M. C. (12-1), 31. M. C. (12-1), 32. M. C. (12-1), 33. M. C. (12-1), 34. M. C. (12-1), 35. M. C. (12-1), 36. M. C. (12-1), 37. M. C. (12-1), 38. M. C. (12-1), 39. M. C. (12-1), 40. M. C. (12-1), 41. M. C. (12-1), 42. M. C. (12-1), 43. M. C. (12-1), 44. M. C. (12-1), 45. M. C. (12-1), 46. M. C. (12-1), 47. M. C. (12-1), 48. M. C. (12-1), 49. M. C. (12-1), 50. M. C. (12-1), 51. M. C. (12-1), 52. M. C. (12-1), 53. M. C. (12-1), 54. M. 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## Oliver Holt in Miami meets the quarterback who came good at last

### Chandler: transformation

Atlanta have been richly rewarded for putting their trust in the straight-talking Chandler

Chandler had an excellent season for the Cardinals in 1992, but at the beginning of 1993 Phoenix signed Steve Beuerlein and chose to start with him. He went to the Los Angeles Rams, who preferred to start with Chris Miller, and from there to the Houston Oilers, who promptly signed Steve McNair. He seemed condemned to a career in the purgatory of mediocrity.

**LINKS**  
WEBSITE: [superbowl.lycos.com](http://superbowl.lycos.com)  
[www.nfl.com](http://www.nfl.com)  
TELEVISION:  
Sky Sports One, Sunday  
10.30am (live)

To complete the picture, every one of the coaches who lost their faith in Chandler lost their jobs soon afterwards. The Falcons have just awarded him a four-year, \$25 million contract extension with a \$6 million signing bonus. In every other NFL city in which he played, Chandler always rented a house. Last month, at last, he bought one.

**OKER**

THE 1976 STATE BUDGETING 43

### WORD-WATCHING

**Answers from page 50**

(b) A kind or loving look. An English adaptation of the Italian *bel guardo*, "lovely look". Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, 1590: "Upon her eyelids many graces saue...Working belgards and amorous re-traine."

**SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE**  
1. Nc6+! h3g6; 2. Qb6+ and mate follows.

100

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**We apologise for any inconvenience caused.**

# ASDA

هكذا من الجمل



# Catching sight of genius through the crowd

One of the great unsolved mysteries of world art is why the British say "Van Gogh", and the Americans say "Van Go", whereas the Dutch say something like "Fm Ghghurgh. Oh, sorry. Would you like a tissue?" But then we say "Mona Lisa", and they say "Moana" while the French say something, poised decorously between the two.

Fortunately Louis Grossman did not feature on *Mad About Monet* (BBC1), or the father of Impressionism would have sounded like a cheese sauce played at slow speed. He would not have been out of place, however, in the company of oddballs from the worldwide fraternity of Monet nerds, who peopled this peculiar, hybrid documentary.

Mostly it was a completely conventional biography. Contrary to the mythology, artists, like writers, often have surprisingly dull private lives. Their diaries read: early breakfast, painting, lunch, lots more painting, dinner, played with cat, early bed. They spend far more time than most of us watching paint dry.

Despite the fact that he spearheaded a revolution in approach to art (actually he developed it from techniques pioneered in England by Turner and Whistler), Monet's life was relatively uneventful and domestic. He was too busy exploring the possibilities of colour to be colourful himself. Life in his last home at Giverny was, we were told, almost "monastic".

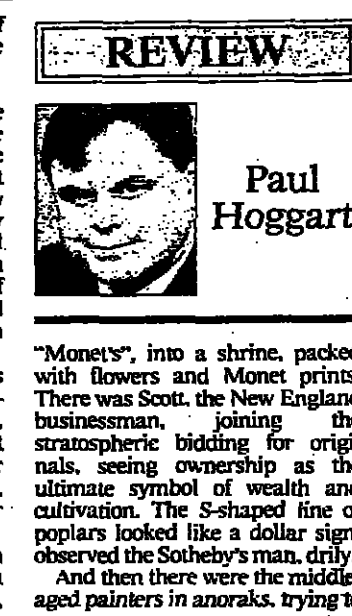
Even the characterful anecdotes revolved around the success of his work — Monet cultivating his image as the artist out in nature, taking journalists to dangerous locations. Monet misreading the tide timetables and almost getting washed off a Normandy beach. Monet feverishly juggling 20 or 30 canvases as he tries to capture the

shifting light patterns on a line of poplars, lusing it and throwing the lot into the river, easel and all.

The programme, like the artist, lived through the painting. There were some illuminating comments, but personally I didn't feel anybody really got inside that extraordinary genius. Shots of rare or unusual works reminded us that he can still surprise us, despite decades of over-reproduction, although all were whipped from our sight with unseemly haste.

But the critical biography was intercut with another documentary, so the slightly disappointing art appreciation class was forever being interrupted by observed, reminding you why you no longer enjoy looking at his paintings.

There was Jason, the Burton hairdresser, inspired by Athena reproductions to convert his salon,



Paul Hoggart

recreate the paradise of Monet's Giverny garden by a bleak, red-fingering English pond.

In the end the programme performed a really useful service. I remembered the flush of awe and pleasure when I first saw his work, and realised I had fallen out of love, not with the paintings, but with other people's love of them. Next stop the Royal Academy.

But what's an artistic reputation when the fate of the Universe is at stake? If you attempt to explain the theories of astrophysics or cosmology in everyday language they tend to sound rather dumb.

Towards the end of *From Here To Infinity* (BBC2), last night's Hoggart, I began to think that this is because they are really dumb.

This was the gist. "We figured out that the Universe probably began 15 billion years ago when it exploded in a ginormous fireball from a point of infinite density. Ever since, then it has been

expanding. But we reckon it must be slowing down, because that's what usually happens after an explosion. Eventually its own gravity will start to pull it all back in again, and it will collapse into itself in a 'big crunch'."

I myself have hypothesised in this newspaper a "big boing" theory, whereby the Universe keeps pulsing in and out at hundred-billion-year intervals, but for some reason this seems to have been ignored by physicists.

Now Saul Perlmutter has developed a system for spotting supernovae, exploding stars several billion times brighter than ordinary stars, which occur very rarely and last only a few weeks. These, apparently, enable you to measure the speed of expansion of the further reaches of the Universe.

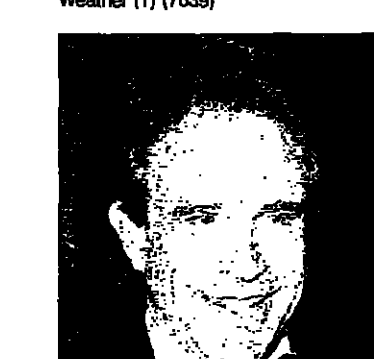
Perlmutter and others have discovered that these stars are not slowing down, but speeding up.

The Universe is flying apart ever faster. This has really upset the apple-cart. The boffins are appalled, some are even in denial. They can't understand what is pushing the Universe apart. Some mysterious force must be operating in the vacuum of space, overcoming gravity.

Excuse me if this sounds dumb. But since they haven't worked out how a point of infinite density came to be floating around in the void of eternity, and since they have no idea what made it explode, why do they think they can figure out what's going to do next? How can you work out what the effects or duration of an explosion are going to be if you haven't got the faintest idea what caused it in the first place?

"Knock, knock, knock!" yell the customs officers on *The Knock* (ITV). "Who's there?" we reply. "Ivor." "Ivor who?" "Ivor Surfeitofclashesanotherwise-entertainingscript."

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (70558)
  - 7.00 Breakfast News (112837)
  - 9.00 Kilroy (114547)
  - 9.45 The Vanessa Show (11581287)
  - 10.55 News: Weather (11747881)
  - 11.00 Real Roots (7567558)
  - 11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1174644)
  - 11.55 News: Weather (11680813)
  - 12.00pm Call My Bluff (1174726)
  - 12.30 Wipeout (3019558)
  - 12.55 The Weather Show (115721610)
  - 1.00 One O'Clock News (113446)
  - 1.30 Regional News: Weather (11679417)
  - 1.40 Neighbours: Karl has his car stolen (11585233)
  - 2.05 Inside (11741707)
  - 2.55 Body Spies: Keep-fit routines for busy parents (1097418)
  - 3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (1277702)
  - 3.45 Spider (11552813) 3.50 Smart on the Road (11578875) 4.05 Rugs (1157875)
  - 4.30 L & P Friday (1110178)
  - 4.55 Newsround Extra (1155525) 5.10 Blue Peter (1157233)
  - 5.35 Neighbours (11747455)
  - 6.00 Six O'Clock News: Weather (11233)
  - 6.30 Regional News Magazine (113)
  - 6.50 Celebrity Ready, Steady, Cook: Light-hearted culinary contest with Coronation Street's Martin Hancock and Jane Danson (114320)
  - 7.30 Top of the Pops: Includes performances from the Offspring, Terence Young, Gay Dad, Sebadoh and 911 (11497)
  - 8.00 Vets in Practice: Sam is called on to calm the nerves of a stallion (11528)
  - 8.30 A Question of Sport with Sue Barker, Stuart Pearce, Mark Richardson, Matt Dawson and Matthew Pinsent join regular team captains Ally McCoist and John Parrott (11875)
  - 9.00 Nine O'Clock News: Regional News: Weather (11753)



Warren Beatty joins Michael Parkinson in conversation (9.30pm)

- 9.30 Parkinson: The comedian-cum-actor Alan Davies joins Michael Parkinson, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and the Hollywood icon Warren Beatty on the acclaimed chat show (1142323)
- 10.25 Look Up (11589) Sylvester Stallone stars as a tough cop transferred by a sadistic warden to a brutal high-security prison. Thriller, with Donald Sutherland. Directed by John Flynn (1163455)
- 12.05am The Stand-Up Show Comedy series, hosted by Ardal O'Hanlon (1154248)
- 12.35 The Big End A Merseyside man with a sideline in detection (117) (11548160)
- 1.05 Blue City (1158) A dither sets out to untangle his father's murder, starring Judd Nelson and Ally Sheedy. Directed by Michelle MacLellan (11223052)
- 2.00 Weather (1157030)
- 2.15 Tennis: Australian Open Women's singles final (11582475)
- 3.00 BBC News 24 (1155585)

- BBC2**
- 7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Harry Jeremy (11247815) 7.05 Teletubbies (11240325) 7.20 Secret Squirrel and the Squirrel Scouts (11240325) 7.35 Shogun (11240325) 7.45 Newsround (11240325) 7.55 Newsround (11240325) 8.05 Newsround (11240325) 8.15 Newsround (11240325) 8.25 Newsround (11240325) 8.35 Newsround (11240325) 8.45 Newsround (11240325) 8.55 Newsround (11240325) 9.05 Newsround (11240325) 9.15 Newsround (11240325) 9.25 Newsround (11240325) 9.35 Newsround (11240325) 9.45 Newsround (11240325) 9.55 Newsround (11240325) 10.05 Newsround (11240325) 10.15 Newsround (11240325) 10.25 Newsround (11240325) 10.35 Newsround (11240325) 10.45 Newsround (11240325) 10.55 Newsround (11240325) 11.05 Newsround (11240325) 11.15 Newsround (11240325) 11.25 Newsround (11240325) 11.35 Newsround (11240325) 11.45 Newsround (11240325) 11.55 Newsround (11240325) 12.05 Newsround (11240325) 12.15 Newsround (11240325) 12.25 Newsround (11240325) 12.35 Newsround (11240325) 12.45 Newsround (11240325) 12.55 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## SAILING 50

Bullimore yearning for recognition as serious yachtsman

## SPORT

FRIDAY JANUARY 29 1999

## AMERICAN FOOTBALL 54

Chandler relishing opportunity to send Falcons soaring



Unheralded Mauresmo overpowers Davenport to reach final

# Teenager muscles in on the women's game

FROM JULIAN MUSCAT, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT IN MELBOURNE

SHE bears the shoulders of a man and plays like one. So ventured Lindsay Davenport, the world No 1, who was sensationally bundled out of the Australian Open by Amelie Mauresmo, of France, yesterday. Mauresmo, unseeded, plays Martina Hingis, the defending champion, in the final tomorrow after Hingis subdued Monica Seles in the second semi-final.

Mauresmo's victory represents something of a statement on the future of women's tennis. The world junior champion in 1996, when she overwhelmed her fellow teenagers with her raw strength, Mauresmo now threatens to trample over all-comers in the senior game.

Hingis will start as a warm favourite to land her third successive Australian Open title, but in the longer term Mauresmo, 19, promises to raise the bar of performance to fresh heights. Her style resembles that of a Spanish male baseliner, deploying heavy top spin from her long, looping ground strokes. Such an approach requires considerable strength. Mauresmo possesses that in abundance.

"She does not hit the ball like any other girl," Davenport said. "Women's tennis isn't normally played like that. She hits the ball so hard, so strong. I thought I was playing a guy." When told of Davenport's comments, Mauresmo said: "I take that as a compliment. I need to feel very strong physically to play my game."

Christine Truman ventured similar thoughts when, 30 years ago, she first set eyes on

Margaret Court. But Court, four times an Australian Open champion, did not have the hint of masculinity about Mauresmo's face, nor her masculine hands. Add to that Mauresmo's imposing physique, which she has developed through regular gym work, and you have the template for women's tennis in the 21st century. Power is increasingly the name of the game.

It was all too much for Davenport, who had not dropped a set in her previous 12 grand-slam matches. She was unable to handle Mauresmo's first service, which often reached velocities of 180kph, and succumbed 4-6, 7-5, 7-5 in 1hr 55min.

Even when Davenport estab-

Culture clash.....7  
Results.....50

lished a 4-2 lead in the decisive set, she looked strangely vulnerable. It was almost as though Davenport, not Mauresmo, was appearing in her first grand-slam semi-final.

Mauresmo has yet to win a tournament on the regular tour. Her junior record embraced titles at Roland Garros and Wimbledon in 1996, after which she was expected to make an immediate impression at senior level. A spate of minor injuries halted her in her tracks until, in May last year, she announced herself as an emerging force in Berlin.

On that occasion, Mauresmo fended off match points in qualifying, then accounted for Dominique van Roost, Davenport and Jana Novotna before



Gym'll fix it: Mauresmo has worked hard to develop an imposing physique that helped to account for Davenport yesterday

falling to Conchita Martinez in the final. Her world ranking rose 80 places, to No 29, in 1998.

Mauresmo is here with her girlfriend, Sylvie Bourdon, who runs a tennis bar in St Tropez. Mauresmo moved permanently to St Tropez late last year and hired Christophe Fournerie, a journeyman professional, as her coach. She is bidding to become the first unseeded grand-slam champion since Chris O'Neil won here 20 years ago. O'Neil earned Aus \$6,000 for her triumph; Mauresmo stands to collect \$679,000 (about £270,000).

Remarkably, Mauresmo, unheralded before this tournament, is the elder of the finalists. Hingis is nine months younger and plainly fancies

her chances of capturing her fifth grand-slam title. The two have played twice previously. Both times, Hingis won in three sets. In their most recent encounter, in July, Mauresmo actually led by a set and 4-1. Hingis remembers the meeting well.

"She has tended to choke once in a while when she was leading," Hingis said. "Even when she played against me, she made a few errors which she shouldn't have." Mauresmo was not found wanting against Davenport. She was a

bastion of mental strength, imposing her presence on the best player in the world for the past six months.

Mauresmo also repelled two match points in her first-round match here, against Corina Morariu. However, her physique does not intimidate Hingis. "Serena Williams has stronger shoulders," Hingis said. "I don't think that she hits the ball very hard. I have a big chance to win this title again and I am definitely pleased that I don't have to play Lindsay in the final."

Hingis's 6-2, 6-4 defeat of Seles severed the latter's 33-game unbeaten streak in this tournament. Seles, seeded No 6, was a pale imitation of the player who accounted for Steffi Graf 24 hours earlier.

She opened with a stream of unforced errors and never came to terms with Hingis's clever courtwork. A key factor was Hingis's high first-service ratio of 64 per cent.

The first men's semi-final, between unseeded opponents, went to Thomas Enqvist, who trounced Nicolas Pietrangeli 6-3, 7-5, 6-1. In the final on Sunday, Enqvist plays either Yevgeny Kafelnikov, seeded No 10, or Tommy Haas, who crossed swords in the early hours of this morning.

Meanwhile, Hannah Collin, of Surrey, reached the quarter-finals of the girls' singles when she dismissed Melanie Clayton, of Australia, 6-2, 6-4. Collin was due to play Nadejda Petrova, of Russia, seeded No 1, in the early hours.

# Collymore's plight leaves his manager bewildered

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

WHEN John Gregory, the Aston Villa manager, was asked for his definition of stress yesterday, his answer was emphatic. "Think of a 29-year-old player at Rochdale who has got three months left on his contract, a mortgage and three kids," he said. "I wonder what's going through his mind when he reads about all this."

Gregory's delivery was cold and unemotional, with little visible sympathy for the apparent plight of Stan Collymore, the temperamental Villa striker. On Monday, it was revealed that Collymore is suffering from stress, is seeking medical advice and will not be available to Villa in the foreseeable future.

With the move of Juninho, the Atlético Madrid midfielder, to Villa Park edging closer, Gregory was able to take some crumbs of comfort from a firing and confusing week. Yet the continuing woes of Collymore bewildered him. "Maybe I'm a bit old-fashioned," he said, "but it's an issue that is new to me and I don't think any other player at this club is likely to get like that. But then, I suppose no one has had the pressures like Stan has. I'm told it's stress. There are no substances or alcohol involved. Yes, we will give Stan our support, as we would any of our employees. How it will pan out? I really don't know. I'm a football manager, not a social worker."

He added: "I can't understand how someone in his position could end up like this. He's got a serious problem and only he can really sort it out. We've done everything to help him. He wanted to see someone about it and we've made that possible."

It is unlikely that Collymore, 28, can now play a prominent role in Villa's tilt at the FA Cup. Gregory has tolerated, with grudging teeth, the player's frequent indiscretions — as did Brian Little, his predecessor — but his manner yesterday suggested that he will take no more.

Whether Collymore is genuinely stressed out or simply feeling sorry for himself — Gregory left little doubt as to

his personal prognosis — the door, at least, has been left ajar. "Yes, I can see Stan playing again this season," Gregory said. "If he comes back in three months and plays well, he'll be in the team. But I've got 19 or 20 other lads I'm concentrating on."

Juninho, the former Middlesbrough player, would strengthen Gregory's hand should he join the club next week for a fee of about £10 million. He was impressed by what he saw at Villa Park on Wednesday.

Gianni Paladini, Juninho's advisor, said yesterday: "I'm 90 per cent certain that the deal will go through." Gregory was more cautious. "I think he's getting a bit carried away there," he said. "I'd say it's



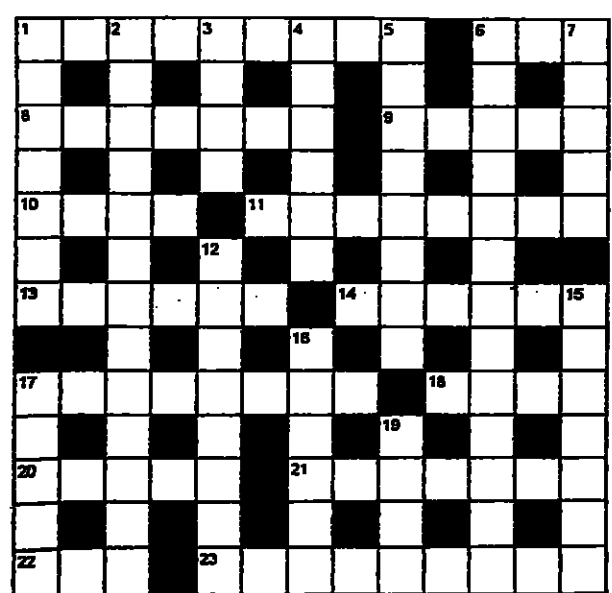
Collymore: stressed out

about fifty-fifty at the moment. I've spoken to one or two people about the lad and he's a genuine character. Even when Middlesbrough were facing relegation, he was trying his little heart out."

Juninho, 25, has made it clear that he does not want to return to Middlesbrough, who sold him for £12 million 18 months ago and hold a first option on him. However, any move from Spain hinges on a clause in his contract that states he is entitled to 20 per cent of the transfer fee.

Viv Anderson, the Middlesbrough assistant manager, said: "Because we have first option, Villa are legally bound to inform us when they have agreed a deal. Whenever we hear from them, we will decide on our response."

## TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1627

## ACROSS

- 1 Old City headgear (6,3)
- 6 A fruit (full) dress (3)
- 8 Raise false alarm (3,4)
- 9 Warning hooter (5)
- 10 Sound reproduction equipment (2,2)
- 11 Figure of speech (8)
- 13 N African desert (6)
- 14 Steal pettily (8)
- 17 Heavy shower (8)
- 18 Simple card game: break (4)
- 20 Tiny pathogen (5)
- 21 Causing hurt (7)
- 22 Staff, shift: 5½ yds (3)
- 23 Take to pieces (9)

## DOWN

- 1 God of wine (7)
- 2 Normal (selfish) behaviour (3,3,3,5)
- 3 School founded 1440 (4)
- 4 Blew heavily; was resentful (6)
- 5 Aus. island state (8)
- 6 Not (done) seriously (3,3,3,2,2)
- 7 One on last legs (5)
- 12 (Motion) put forward (8)
- 15 Forcibly push back (7)
- 16 Noisy commotion (4)
- 17 Underwater worker (5)
- 19 It, town, famous campanile (4)

## SOLUTION TO NO 1626

- ACROSS: 1 Castor 5 Side 8 Fall 9 Singular 10 Misplice  
11 Funk 12 Mentor 14 Pollox 16 Taxi 18 Trousers  
20 Dormouse 21 Love 22 Myth 23 Tangle  
DOWN: 2 Avarice 3 Tulip 4 Restaurant 5 Soufflé  
6 Drain 7 Under protest 13 Triumph 15 Unravel  
17 Agony 19 Salom

SOLUTION TO BOXING DAY TIMES TWO JUMBO Page 50

# Ranatunga wins reprieve but Sri Lanka face World Cup ban

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN PERTH

SRI LANKA, the World Cup holders, may be prevented from defending the trophy when the competition is held in England this summer. That was a possible implication after an extraordinary four-hour disciplinary hearing convened by the International Cricket Council (ICC) into the behaviour of Arjuna Ranatunga, the Sri Lanka captain.

Peter van der Merwe, the ICC match referee, decided reluctantly, after lengthy legal submissions, that he could not impose a suitable punishment on Ranatunga for his behaviour in Adelaide last Saturday. Now the ICC will revise its code, circle it with a ring of fire, and make sure constituent countries sign up, irrespective of what lawyers may argue. Sri Lanka have shown that they regard legal nitpicking more highly than either the spirit of the game or its laws, and if they do not amend that view then their invitation to take part in the World Cup — the ICC's showpiece event — could be rescinded.

Ranatunga threatened to take his players off the field, and told Ross Emerson, one of the umpires, that he, Ranatunga, was in charge of the match. Ranatunga was found guilty of misconduct under the terms of the ICC code of conduct, handed a six-match ban, suspended for a year, and

fined 75 per cent of his match fee.

However, afterwards, van der Merwe, in a statement of remarkable frankness and considerable feeling, made it clear that he had been tied up by the arguments of Ranatunga's lawyers, who won an adjournment on Tuesday and argued restraint of trade when it resumed yesterday.

"This code was drawn up by cricketers, to be administered by cricketers," van der Merwe said. "It was a great disappointment, and a very complicated matter, to find that legal people were in prominence at this hearing. I have no doubt the ICC will take heed of this hearing, and the way it had to be conducted. This little green book will find a lot of amendments in the next edition."

"The charge against Ranatunga was proved. He violated clause one of the code of conduct, that he did not at all times maintain the spirit of the game, besides the laws. Should he be guilty of further violations of the code, then naturally the suspension will come into play, as well as whatever sanctions he incurs."

"Ranatunga expressed regret at the embarrassment he caused his opponents, the public, and the officials, and has

shared by the England team. Alec Stewart, the captain, and Graeme Hick, who was batting when Ranatunga tried to take his players off, attended the hearing but were required for only 20 minutes as the Sri Lankan legal team presented their case.

Other cricketing nations are fed-up with the antics of the Sri Lankans and their manipulative and abusive captain. Australia will point out that Ian Healy was banned for two years ago, for throwing his bat away after he had left the field. England will recall that Chris Lewis was fined A\$1,600 (£600) for "sending off" Craig McDermott in a Test match at Adelaide four years ago.

Now the World has seen Ranatunga try to lead his team off, prod an umpire in the chest, swear at match officials and tell one of them: "I'm in charge of this game." If an ICC match referee cannot enforce the code of conduct when the evidence is so overwhelming, the constitution needs to be ripped up, and will be.

As for the Sri Lankans, they have disgraced themselves with their flagrant disregard for the game, and those who guard it. Their lawyers may have got the captain off the hook this time, but his reputation has gone. Throughout cricket, his name is mud.



Ranatunga: misconduct

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